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THE WOMAN IN THE CASE

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

BY

CLYDE FITCH

BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1915

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1915

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THE WOMAN IN THE CASE

ACT I. At the Rolfes'.

"I love you, first, last and always. You represent life in this world to me."

ACT II. Visitors' Room in the Tombs.
Three Weeks Later.

"My faith in him is more than human; it comes from my soul, — and you know in our soul lives whatever there is of divine in us."

ACT III. An Apartment in West 52d Street.
Two Months Later.

"Will you men never understand what a woman can undergo for the man she loves! Men endure physical torture for our sakes, which our bodies refuse to support; but we make it up in what we can endure mentally and spiritually for you."

ACT IV. At the Rolfes'.
One Week Later.

Place. New York City.
Time. The Present.

THE PERSONS IN THE PLAY

MARGARET ROLFE.

MRS. HUGHES. *Her mother.*

CLAIRE FORSTER.

ELSIE BREWSTER.

DORA MILLER.

LOUISE MANE.

MAID.

JULIAN ROLFE.

TOMPSON.

JIMMY O'NEILL.

LOUIS KLAUFFSKY.

WALTERS. *Servant to the Rolfes.*

INSPECTOR WILLIAMS.

ATTENDANT.

POLICEMAN.

Produced on January 30, 1905, at the Herald Square Theatre, New York, with the following cast:

Margaret Rolfe	Blanche Walsh
Mrs. Hughes	Eleanor Carey
Claire Forster	Dorothy Dorr
Elsie Brewster	Kathryn Keyes
Dora Miller	Helen Ware
Louise Mane	Florence St. Leonard
Maid	Ethlyn Clemens
Julian Rolfe	Robert Drouet
Tompson	George Fawcett
Jimmy O'Neill	Forster Lardner
Louis Klauffsky	Samuel Edwards
Walters	William Wadsworth
Inspector Williams	William Travers
Attendant	Charles Macdonald
Policeman	W. H. Wright

Produced at the Garrick Theatre, London, on June 2, 1909, with the following cast:

Margaret Rolfe	Grace Lane
Mrs. Hughes	Kate Serjeantson
Claire Forster	Violet Vanbrugh
Elsie Brewster	Eva Killick
Dora Miller	Enid Sass
Louise Mane	Sybil Grey
Julian Rolfe	Herbert Sleath
Tompson	Charles V. France
Jimmy O'Neill	Frank Tennant
Louis Klauffsky	E. Dagnall
Walters	Cecil Yapp
Inspector Williams	Henry Hare

Attendant, Policeman, Maid.

The play was produced by Mr. Allan Aynesworth.

ACT I

SCENE: *At the Rolfes'. A very charming drawing-room in a New York apartment, at the end of dinner.*

JULIAN ROLFE, *a handsome man of thirty-four, enters, and holds the door open for three ladies to pass into the drawing-room from the dining room,* — DORA, LOUISE, *and* ELSIE, — *young, pretty, and very smartly dressed. They were the bridesmaids at his wedding three months before the opening of the play.*

JULIAN. Make the most of your freedom. I warn you, we men won't keep away very long.

DORA. [*Sitting on the sofa.*] *See* that you don't! Remember we are leaving very early,

because you are really an invalid, and shouldn't keep late hours.

JULIAN. Nonsense! I'm well enough, now! Why, I hope to go out to-morrow.

LOUISE. [*Sitting on the sofa beside* DORA.] That's all very well, but you — a man who's had pneumonia and hasn't been out yet! The truth is, we ought all to have regretted this party.

JULIAN. Then neither Margaret nor I would ever have forgiven you. And the next time we got married, we'd have engaged an entirely new set of bridesmaids!

[*They all laugh.*

ELSIE. When Margaret comes back, send her in to us, won't you? Don't you men keep her with you.

JULIAN. I promise to deny ourselves for your sakes, if she gives me the chance; but she will

probably join you here herself, when she finishes with this newspaper man.

ELSIE. What a thing it is to get married and be interviewed by the papers!

JULIAN. Oh, but we're an old married couple, now.

DORA. [*Laughing.*] Three months!

ELSIE. *I* consider you still in the tunnel — "us-two-alone-away-from-everybody" period.

JULIAN. [*Laughing.*] Nonsense!

[*Starts to go.*

DORA. Tell the men not to forget that we *must leave* here at nine-thirty, in any case. You know, we're rehearsing a minuet for Mrs. Warner's fancy dress ball.

LOUISE. Wish you and Margaret could come.

JULIAN. I'm afraid we can't! Our fancy dress just *now* must be Darby and Joan!

[WALTERS *enters at Right with coffee, and passes it. All take it, except* ELSIE.

JULIAN. Well, excuse me.

[*Goes out.*

LOUISE. He looks pretty well for a man who's been so fearfully ill.

DORA. Yes. You know, poor Margaret says they never thought they would save him.

LOUISE. He'll have to be careful for a long time, won't he?

DORA. Rather! A relapse would be a very dangerous thing!

LOUISE. What in the world can a reporter want of her all this time?

ELSIE. [*Beginning to drum popular songs on the piano.*] And just at dinner! I wonder!

LOUISE. Shall I take a cup for her?

DORA. I would.

[LOUISE *puts aside a cup of coffee for* MARGARET.

DORA. What a nice idea to have a bridesmaids' dinner all over again — after the fatal deed is done!

ELSIE. Yes; it sort of stamps the thing a success!

LOUISE. My dear, I don't think I ever knew a happier marriage than Margaret's and Julian's.

DORA. They're so congenial — like the same things. Both are music mad, and they've both a sense of humor. Besides, she's the dearest girl in the world, anyway!

LOUISE. [*Putting her cup on the table.*] And everyone says no one has ever made so many friends in so short a time as Julian has since he came here to live.

DORA. How long is it?

LOUISE. Only three or four years.

[WALTERS *enters with liqueurs, which he passes.*

DORA. Of course his being a college chum of Philip Long's gave him all Philip's friends at once. He really owed his position here in New York to Philip.

LOUISE. As a doctor, do you mean?

DORA. Oh, no! They say he'd already made a name for himself in his profession, in Cincinnati, before he came to New York. I mean socially.

ELSIE. [*Stops playing.*] Didn't you feel awfully queer when he proposed the toast to Philip?

LOUISE. What was it he said? I didn't take it in, I was so surprised.

DORA. "Let's drink to the memory of one whom I am sure we all miss to-night, and more than I, for one, can say. To the dear memory

of my best man, and my best friend, Philip Long!"

LOUISE. You know, it's the first time I ever knew any one who was murdered. They always seem to belong to a different class.

ELSIE. Yes. You know, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was very smart to get murdered, but nowadays it isn't at all the thing in smart society!

LOUISE. My dear Elsie!

ELSIE. Yes, that was horrid of me. I'm sorry!

DORA. I am perfectly convinced it was suicide.

LOUISE. Lots of people think it would have been much more sensible of the Longs to have let the whole thing die down.

DORA. But you know what old Mr. Long's like. Nothing would persuade him to let the

ignominy of suicide rest on his son's name. He is determined it is murder, and that he'll prove it.

ELSIE. Does any one know what Mr. Rolfe thinks?

[*A moment's pause.*

DORA. We might ask Margaret.

LOUISE. No! I hate to talk about it, especially to-night. It'll depress us all!

DORA. What a lovely wedding it was, wasn't it?

ELSIE. Lovely!

[*Her fingers running into a sentimental ballad on the piano.*

DORA. But, if you remember, Philip Long was a little *distrait*. I remember some one joking him about it.

LOUISE. How could he have been in love with such an awful creature?

ELSIE. My dear! Don't fly in the face of Providence by questioning why men fall in love with any of us. Be grateful that they do, and let it go at that!

[*They all laugh.*

DORA. They say she's pretty — or used to be, — and is very clever and attractive.

[ELSIE *stops playing.*

LOUISE. My brother says Philip was always rather weak, and couldn't resist any temptation. If he got with a crowd of men who drank, he always drank too much; and if he got with a crowd who played cards, he gambled too high, and lost. And almost any girl who tried, could do what she liked with him.

ELSIE. Mercy! Wish *I'd* known that!

LOUISE. [*Laughing.*] Elsie!

DORA. That was exactly the basis of Mr.

Rolfe's and Philip's friendship. He took hold of Phil, and kept him straight.

ELSIE. Well, *do* let's talk of something else, or we'll have an awful evening!

DORA. [*Insinuatingly.*] Suppose we talk about Jimmy O'Neill.

ELSIE. Please *don't!*

[*She turns to the piano and plays again.*

DORA. You are not engaged to Jimmy O'Neill.

ELSIE. I am not!!

DORA. Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself!

ELSIE. Why?

DORA. Because you carry on disgracefully with him.

ELSIE. Oh, well, *he's engaged to me*, but *I* am not engaged to him.

DORA. Oh, *that's* a new way to look at it!

LOUISE. No two people could see as much of each other as you two, without being bored to death, unless they were in love.

ELSIE. We have an intellectual friendship!

DORA. Oh, I see! Well, when you *are* married, I'll give you a set of encyclopedias for a wedding present.

LOUISE. And I'll get you a complete edition of the "Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire" at Wanamaker's.

[*All laugh as* MARGARET *enters.*

MARGARET. I'm glad you're having such an amusing time!

DORA. Elsie says she has an intellectual friendship with Jimmy O'Neill!

MARGARET. Well! I've heard it called a good many things, but never that before! [*Sitting down with them.* DORA *gets the coffee from*

the table, and offers it to MARGARET.] No, thanks.

LOUISE. What did the reporter want, Margaret?

MARGARET. He wanted to know if I'd seen his evening paper, and when I said I hadn't, he wanted me to talk about Philip Long. Of course I wouldn't, but I had the greatest trouble in the world getting rid of him!

DORA. My dear, your apartment is too charming for anything! I never knew a young married couple with so few hideous things!

ELSIE. Yes, — where are all your wedding presents?

MARGARET. In the *Chamber of Horrors!*

ELSIE. How do you mean?

MARGARET. That's what we call the library, where we've put all the impossible gifts.

DORA. [*Leaning over the piano.*] Do take us there, and let's see them.

ELSIE. [*Rising.*] If I find *mine!!*

MARGARET. Oh, don't worry, yours is in *my* room. It's a rule that the gifts of guests are always brought out and put somewhere else, when we *know* they're coming!

[*They all laugh.*

ELSIE. Splendid idea!

DORA. But suppose some one comes unexpectedly, and doesn't see their present here, aren't they hurt?

MARGARET. [*Rising.*] Oh, no! I take them at once to the library, and show it to them in the *room* of *honor*, as it were. Of course I wouldn't hurt any one's feelings for anything, especially any one who had been kind enough to remember me on the happiest day of my life — my wedding-day.

[WALTERS *enters, and announces* MR. TOMPSON, *a lawyer,* — *a good-looking man about forty-five years old, who enters.*

TOMPSON. Good evening, Mrs. Rolfe! I'm afraid I'm rather in the way!

[*General greeting.*

MARGARET. Not at all. We're just going up to the library to see my wedding presents; the beautiful lamp *you gave me is there;* you must come and see it!

[*The others mark this with secret amusement.*

ELSIE. [*Mischievously.*] Is my present there, Margaret?

MARGARET. [*Also mischievously.*] No, it *usually is,* but it was taken out this evening, just before you came, *for some reason or other.*

[*All laugh.*

TOMPSON. What's the joke?

MARGARET. Oh, nothing! Come along.

TOMPSON. No, — would you mind taking the young ladies, and coming back to me for a moment. I just want five minutes with you.

MARGARET. Something serious?

TOMPSON. [*Covering the truth.*] Oh, no, no!

MARGARET. Come, girls.

[*All going out.*

ELSIE. [*Turning back.*] We'll tell you just how your lamp looks when we come back, Mr. Tompson!

TOMPSON. Thanks.

[*He rings an electric bell by the mantel.*

MARGARET. I'll be back in a moment.

[*They go out.*

[TOMPSON *goes to the lamp, takes out an evening paper, and reads it. He is evidently nervous and worried. Enter* WALTERS *at Right.*

As he enters, TOMPSON *quickly hides the paper behind his back.*

WALTERS. Did you ring, sir?

TOMPSON. Yes, Walters. Is there an evening paper in the house?

WALTERS. I don't know, sir. Mr. Rolfe sometimes brings one home, and sometimes doesn't. I haven't seen one this evening, sir.

TOMPSON. The servants have none?

WALTERS. No, sir. Having a dinner party on, we've none of us been out, sir.

TOMPSON. Well, open the hall door, and tell Mrs. Rolfe's mother, Mrs. Hughes, who is waiting there, to come in. We don't want the guests to know she is here.

WALTERS. [*Looking surprised.*] Yes, sir.

[*Goes out.*

[TOMPSON *crosses the room to the sofa, watching*

the door. MRS. HUGHES *enters. She is a handsome, well-preserved woman of fifty-four.*

MRS. HUGHES. Are they still in the dining room?

TOMPSON. No, — only Julian and the men. Your daughter has taken her guests to see the wedding presents, but she'll be back at once.

MRS. HUGHES. Do you think she's seen the paper?

TOMPSON. I don't know — the servants haven't.

[*Enter* MARGARET.

MARGARET. [*Surprised.*] Why, mother! Does Julian know — is anything the matter?

[*Going to her, and taking her hand.*

MRS. HUGHES. Shall we tell her?

TOMPSON. My dear Madam, isn't that what you brought me here to do?

MRS. HUGHES. Yes. You see, Margaret, Mrs. Mane brought it to me. John had brought it home to her, — not her husband, — her son, I mean, — and he'd seen it in the train by accident, on his way up town —

MARGARET. [*Alarmed and curious.*] Seen *what?*

[*Looking from her mother to* TOMPSON.

MRS. HUGHES. My dear, I'm telling you! She said she thought I ought to see it at once. And you can imagine what a state it put me into!

MARGARET. [*More alarmed.*] No, I can't! I can't, because you don't tell me what it is, mother.

MRS. HUGHES. Why — [*Stops.*] It's — [*Hesitates.*] It's an awful article in an evening paper. I say it's libellous. I went at once to Mr. Tompson, didn't I? — [TOMPSON *bows assent, as she*

doesn't wait for him to speak] and said you must come at once to her? The woman is a most dangerous person, evidently, who will stop at nothing. I think she's at the bottom of it all. Mr. Tompson won't say, but I tell him it takes a woman to catch a woman. Don't you agree with me, Margaret?

MARGARET. [*Desperate.*] Mother, if you'll only tell me what it all is!

MRS. HUGHES. I thought I had — I've been trying to.

TOMPSON. [*Giving* MARGARET *the paper.*] Read for yourself. It's better.

[MARGARET *takes the paper to the lamp.*

MRS. HUGHES. [*To* TOMPSON.] What have you decided?

TOMPSON. I can decide nothing till I see Julian.

MARGARET. [*Looking up from the paper.*] A reporter was here and asked me if I'd read this.

[TOMPSON *shows interest.*

MRS. HUGHES. I hope you told him you hadn't!

MARGARET. Of course, because I hadn't.

[*Reads on.*

MRS. HUGHES. I'm glad you told him so, anyway. Mr. Tompson thinks it may be best to ignore the whole thing. But I tell him — still I don't know — what —

MARGARET. [*Interrupting.*] But this is absurd! Julian could only have known Philip Long's mistress through Philip.

MRS. HUGHES. Exactly what I say! I believe in suing the paper.

MARGARET. [*Doubtingly.*] Love letter from Julian calling her "Darling Claire"!

MRS. HUGHES. So they say, and found in her desk!

MARGARET. Oh, this is some sensational story! It'll all be disproved in the morning.

MRS. HUGHES. That's just what I think, and we'd better ignore the whole thing! [*To* TOMPSON.] You see! [*To* MARGARET.] He didn't want me to come to you at all! He wanted to go to Julian privately. But I said I wasn't going to have your married life begun with secrets. [*To* TOMPSON.] I agree with Margaret, — the whole thing will blow over in the morning.

MARGARET. [*Putting aside the paper.*] Ah, I won't read any more! I don't believe a word of it, and it'll only make me angry and miserable, — and Julian too! [*To* MRS. HUGHES.] Don't show this to him.

TOMPSON. Oh, but we must! Others would

speak of it to him, if we didn't, and it's only right he should hear of it from us.

MRS. HUGHES. Yes, I must say, Margaret, I agree with Mr. Tompson.

MARGARET. Julian! The soul of honor!

MRS. HUGHES. Oh, yes, — silly about telling the truth, even when a boy. I never could make him see there were lies and *lies!*

MARGARET. Why, Mr. Tompson, the idea that Julian could want to steal this woman from Philip, and at the very time that he was asking me to marry him! Oh! Oh! It's too preposterous even for his enemies, if he has any, to believe! Julian, who has given me three of the most beautiful months that ever any woman was blessed with! Julian, who has shown me more truth and beauty and goodness in the world than ever I, in my most innocent girlhood,

dreamed were there! Julian, a man loved by all the men he's come in contact with! Julian!! *My* Julian! Oh! If it wasn't so terrible a thing to say, even when not true, [*half hysterically*] I'd *laugh!*

[*She tears the paper in two.*

TOMPSON. Don't, please! [*He is too late.*] I wanted to show that to Julian, all the same!

MARGARET. [*Giving him the pieces.*] Tell him in a few words, if you like, but don't make him read through that brutal story. Remember how ill he's been, — and really it isn't necessary.

[*She rings the electric bell.*

MRS. HUGHES. Margaret's right!

MARGARET. I'll send for Julian, and you see him alone. I'm sure it would make him feel worse about it, to have me here. I'd rather he didn't know I knew anything about it, if you

can arrange it so. Come, mother. You and I will take the men up to the library.

MRS. HUGHES. Oh, my dear, among the horrors!

TOMPSON. What horrors?

MRS. HUGHES. The misfit wedding presents; they're all there!

[*Laughing.* TOMPSON *laughs too.*

MARGARET. Not *all.* Mr. Tompson's lamp is there, mother.

MRS. HUGHES. [*Saving herself.*] The one that gives such a splendid light?

MARGARET. *Exactly!*

TOMPSON. Well done!

[JIMMY O'NEILL *comes in from the dining room.*

O'NEILL. I say, — we're bored in there. Can't we join you, now? Oh, excuse me, — I didn't

know you had other guests. Good evening, Mrs. Hughes.

MRS. HUGHES. Good evening, Jimmy.

O'NEILL. [*To* TOMPSON.] How do you do?

TOMPSON. Good evening, Mr. O'Neill.

O'NEILL. Where's Elsie and the rest of the little lot?

MARGARET. Gone up to the library. You bring the men up there to join us.

[*Enter* WALTERS.

O'NEILL. All right.

[*Goes out.*

MARGARET. Walters, tell Mr. Rolfe Mr. Tompson wishes to see him here a moment.

WALTERS. Yes, Madam.

[*He exits.*

TOMPSON. Is Mr. Rolfe entirely recovered?

MARGARET. Well, he's wonderfully better!

And he *would* have our little dinner to-night. But the doctor forbids his going to the office yet.

MRS. HUGHES. The doctor's quite right.

TOMPSON. I suppose it's hard for Rolfe to keep idle.

MARGARET. Oh, awfully! He'd disobey the doctor, if he dared. But he feels still the slightest exertion, and any strain or extra effort would really be serious. You see, he has no strength to fight a relapse with.

MRS. HUGHES. Of course, you know, he seems perfectly well to me.

MARGARET. He will be, soon. He's to go out to-morrow. Don't let this worry him, — will you, Mr. Tompson?

TOMPSON. No, indeed, no more than I can help.

MARGARET. [*To* MRS. HUGHES.] Come along, mother!

MRS. HUGHES. But I'm not dressed.

MARGARET. Nonsense! You talk like Lady Godiva. Come along. [*Going to the door*, MRS. HUGHES *following her.*] Julian will snap his fingers at that article, I'm sure, Mr. Tompson.

[*Both go out.*

[TOMPSON *picks up the pieces of paper, and is putting them together, as* JULIAN *enters, smoking a cigar.* TOMPSON *places the papers on the piano, and joins the two pieces, leaving them there.*

JULIAN. Hello, Tompson!

TOMPSON. [*Going toward him.*] How are you, Rolfe? Glad to hear you're so much better.

JULIAN. Oh, yes, I'm all right now, — or will be, once they let me out, and I'm at work. But you know what doctors and wives are.

TOMPSON. Yes, I know! Life preservers.

JULIAN. True! Well, what can I do for *you?*

[*Sits on the sofa;* TOMPSON *sits down beside him.*

TOMPSON. [*Embarrassed.*] Well — er —

JULIAN. By George! What's the matter? You behave as if you wanted a loan! With pleasure, my dear man, — anything in the world. Ask me for anything — *except my wife* — and with nothing but her I'd be the *richest man you know!*

TOMPSON. [*Smiling.*] You make an old bachelor like me feel pretty much out of it! No, it's not money. There's — er — There's a scandalous article in an evening paper about Philip Long and Claire Forster —

JULIAN. Poor old Philip, — even death didn't get him out of his troubles!

TOMPSON. [*Continuing.*] *And about you.*

JULIAN. [*As if he didn't quite follow.*] What?

TOMPSON. The scandal in the article doesn't really concern Philip; it has to do with *you*.

JULIAN. [*Very quietly, and smoking.*] How do you mean?

TOMPSON. You know, the Long family will not accept the idea of suicide.

JULIAN. Yes.

TOMPSON. And they are bound to leave no stone unturned to explain what they call the mystery of Philip's death.

JULIAN. I know.

TOMPSON. They are urging the police on, and are employing detectives of their own.

JULIAN. Yes!

TOMPSON. And now some of the Press are with them, and take the family's view.

JULIAN. Yes!

TOMPSON. Well, to-night, one of these papers comes out, suggesting — insinuating — that *you* killed Philip Long —

JULIAN. *I!* Dear old Philip! I loved him like a twin brother!

TOMPSON. The motive hinted at is jealousy of the woman.

JULIAN. Ridiculous! I was the woman's greatest enemy. And if I weren't, leaving out my mother, there's only one woman in creation for me — and that's Margaret — the woman I made my wife only one week before the tragic undoing of poor old Phil!

TOMPSON. [*Going to the piano, and glancing down at the paper.*] The paper states it has secured information that the detectives have found, in Claire Forster's flat, proof that you were the woman's lover.

JULIAN. [*Angry and stern, rises.*] It's a lie!

TOMPSON. The writer of the paper claims to have seen letters from you to her.

[*A change comes over* JULIAN; *he puts his cigar on the tray on the table, and he sits back, thoughtfully and without anger. A moment's pause.*

JULIAN. Letters?

TOMPSON. Love letters!

JULIAN. But old ones! Three years old!

TOMPSON. [*Astonished, and with a note of alarm in his voice.*] What! There are letters? Love letters of yours to her?

JULIAN. There might be a few — old ones, if she kept them.

TOMPSON. Kept them!! *Of course* she kept them! Letters are those women's certificates of stock!

JULIAN. But there's nothing incriminating in those letters.

TOMPSON. [*Drawing up a chair beside the sofa.*] How do you know? Do you remember what is in them?

JULIAN. [*With a half laugh, half sneer.*] Hardly! Three years ago, — long before I had ever seen Margaret — for ten days, I thought I was in love with Claire Forster. I picked her out of a sextette, or double octette — or coon chorus, or something! And she took me in. I was more or less of a country boy, and new at the game!

TOMPSON. But —

JULIAN. There's no "but" about it. In ten days I found out just what she was. Her whole nature drew her back into the street; nothing could save her. My decency bored her, thank

God! She had an itch for vice that nothing could cure!

TOMPSON. Are your letters dated?

JULIAN. Likely not. I'm apt just to write only the day of the week at the head of a letter. I don't know and I don't care! That was ages ago. There may be three, there may be four. But they can only make me seem like a fool,—not like a criminal!

TOMPSON. Did Philip know about this?

JULIAN. Yes, I told him the whole thing when I prevented him marrying her.

TOMPSON. When was that?

JULIAN. The day after Margaret and I came back from our honeymoon. But don't let's talk any more about it.

[*Rises, crosses to the piano, and touches the keys.*

TOMPSON. We must; you may have trouble!

JULIAN. Nonsense!

TOMPSON. How did you prevent the marriage?

JULIAN. [*Turns and faces him.*] Showed her up, of course. She'd taken him in good! Won his sympathy, made him believe he was the only man who had moved her better nature.

TOMPSON. Perhaps that was true!

JULIAN. True? Bah! When she'd practically ruined him! Turned him into a drunkard!

TOMPSON. You knew they were intimate?

JULIAN. I knew he was mad about her, but thought he'd find her out, as I did. But he was too much in love. I told him my experience; I told him others I knew of. I told him she was tired of the gutter, and wanted to try respectability at any sacrifice, even of him, but that the old itch would come back. And that when she'd

wrung him dry and sodden, she'd go back to the pavement!

TOMPSON. Well?

JULIAN. He wouldn't believe me! He as good as told me I lied. He asked me to accuse her to her face, — and I did!

[*He takes out a cigar, and clips the end.*

TOMPSON. You did?

JULIAN. Yes, the next night, the night he — died.

[*Takes a match.*

TOMPSON. At his rooms?

JULIAN. Yes.

[*He strikes the match.*

TOMPSON. What did she do?

JULIAN. [*Lighting his cigar.*] Fought to keep him, of course; lied first, and was weak; and then she was strong and indignant. But I

fought, too! Telling him first what she had already done for him, and what more she would do. I asked him what she had so far done for his character; what, with his ideals of life, with his habits even! I asked him if he would take Claire Forster home to be a daughter to his old mother! I said everything I could think of, till she lost her control completely, and gave herself dead away with a hysterical rage of low language that more than proved all I said. There are women like that! If you can once get them started, they lose their heads, and nothing stops them, even if it means their own ruin!

TOMPSON. Then what happened?

JULIAN. He gave me his word not to marry her, and asked me to leave them alone. I did. It was about midnight. He shot himself that morning, early.

TOMPSON. How she must hate you!

JULIAN. [*With a shrug.*] Very probably!

TOMPSON. She'll surely stop at nothing by way of revenge.

JULIAN. Between her and me there's a whole world, Tompson! She can't harm me, let her try all she wants.

TOMPSON. You could turn the evidence against her — frighten her by accusing her of the murder —

JULIAN. No motive!

TOMPSON. A quarrel.

JULIAN. No evidence strong enough — no — She wanted him living, not dead, — that's self-evident.

TOMPSON. And what about this article?

JULIAN. Nothing. Ignore it!

TOMPSON. But if the police —

JULIAN. [*Interrupting.*] My dear old friend, — don't be absurd; you are romancing. I am only sorry that my letters should be spoken of, because I must tell Margaret the story, and I'd have rather spared her, — that's all.

TOMPSON. She has read the article.

JULIAN. Well, I'm sure it made no impression on her?

TOMPSON. No, she was only afraid you would be annoyed.

JULIAN. To-morrow, some other paper will have a new story, and this will be forgotten.

TOMPSON. Very probably. But it's best, in any case, that I should have had this explanation with you.

JULIAN. Why?

TOMPSON. [*Rising.*] Well, you see, if your letters are undated, and if this woman wants

to make trouble, and if the police wish to make out a case somehow — [*Sits down again.*] Have you any proofs?

JULIAN. Of what?

TOMPSON. That you've had nothing to do with Miss Forster for years.

JULIAN. I've the proof of my word, of my love for my wife, of her confidence in me.

TOMPSON. And mine in you! I believe all you have said, implicitly. But you would have to prove it practically for a criminal court.

JULIAN. [*Laughs and rises.*] Tompson, don't you worry! "Shop" is carrying you away.

[*Enter* MARGARET *and* MRS. HUGHES.

MARGARET. Julian, they're all going to Mrs. Warner's for a rehearsal of their dance, you know.

JULIAN. [*Going toward the door.*] Where are they? In the library?

MARGARET. No, down in the hall.

[JULIAN *goes out, and is greeted with a chorus of the three girls at once.*

ELSIE. You're a nice man to sneak away!

DORA. You will deign to come and say good-by to us.

LOUISE. Won't you change your mind and bring Margaret?

[*Together.*

[*Door is heard shutting outside.*

MARGARET. Did you tell him?

TOMPSON. Yes, and he ridiculed taking any notice of the article.

MRS. HUGHES. As I told you he would!

TOMPSON. [*To* MARGARET.] He was only worried for fear it would cause you annoyance.

MARGARET. Dear old Julian!

MRS. HUGHES. Well, of course, Margaret,

you didn't expect him to feel otherwise, did you?

MARGARET. I didn't "expect" anything, mother, because I knew he would feel whatever was right.

MRS. HUGHES. Really, Mr. Tompson, we've had all our trouble for nothing, and upset both our evenings. I was so comfy with everything tight down, and my hair off —

MARGARET. [*Laughing.*] What?

MRS. HUGHES. I mean my hair down and everything tight off, — and was going to have a restful evening. I wish I were back home. I didn't want to come, anyway!

TOMPSON. Well, that's pretty good, considering you came after me, and made me bring you!

MRS. HUGHES. Did I?

TOMPSON. Emphatically you *did!*

MRS. HUGHES. Oh, well, then it was because I thought it was my duty; but I didn't believe in doing it, all the same.

MARGARET. Well, now, mother darling, listen. Don't worry over Julian and me. You know, really, I'm sure Julian won't have it! He is perfectly capable of taking care of himself and me, and you into the bargain, if necessary.

MRS. HUGHES. But, my dear, I'm not happy unless I'm worrying over some one.

MARGARET. Then get married again, darling!

MRS. HUGHES. I've half a mind to; it's so lonely without you! What do you think, Mr. Tompson?

TOMPSON. Is that a proposal?

MRS. HUGHES. Oh, dear no! [*Laughing.*] If I should re-marry, it would be to some nice, weak man, like a genius, or an unlucky speculator, —

some one who wanted to be worried over and looked after, — not a big, successful lawyer like you!

JULIAN. [*Coming back, gaily.*] Well, they've gone!

TOMPSON. You don't sound sorry.

JULIAN. Who isn't sorry! Oh yes, of course, mighty nice crowd!

MRS. HUGHES. Well, don't be angry — but I really must go, too, now!

[MARGARET *and* JULIAN *exchange amused glances.* MARGARET *rings electric bell.*

TOMPSON. [*With a wink at* JULIAN.] Don't you think it's a pity to leave Julian and Margaret all alone the best part of the evening?

MRS. HUGHES. Yes, I'm awfully sorry!

MARGARET. [*Laughing.*] Really!

MRS. HUGHES. But I must go home. I'm reading that new historical novel, and am at

such an exciting part! The heroine's just disguised herself as a man, and I want to finish the book if I can, to-night. You know, she generally does that two-thirds through. [MARGARET *going up to her.*] Good-by, dear! [*Kissing her.*] I've had a lovely time! I mean — I'm glad everything's all right. What did we come over here for, anyway?

[*Turning to* TOMPSON.

MARGARET. Nothing of importance, mother.

MRS. HUGHES. Of course, that's what I told him!

[*Enter* WALTERS.

MARGARET. Mrs. Hughes and Mr. Tompson are going, Walters.

WALTERS. Yes, m'm.

[*Goes out.*

MRS. HUGHES. Good night!

JULIAN. Good night!

MRS. HUGHES. Julian, Margaret says you want me to get married!

JULIAN. [*Laughing.*] What?

MARGARET. [*Laughs.*] *Mother!*

MRS. HUGHES. Well, I think I will have a last look round! Good night.

JULIAN AND MARGARET. Good night.

[MARGARET *goes out with her.*

TOMPSON. [*To* JULIAN.] Good night. Don't put that article entirely out of your mind. I don't want to be an alarmist, and I agree with you there's nothing in it. But the best way to avert trouble of any kind is to be ready to meet it.

JULIAN. Oh, that's all right.

[*They shake hands.*

TOMPSON. [*To* MARGARET, *whom he meets coming in the door.*] Good night.

MARGARET. Good night, and thank you for coming over.

TOMPSON. Not at all.

[*All repeat* "Good night." MARGARET *closes the door, turns, and faces* JULIAN. *They look at each other a second, half amused, but with love in their eyes. The smile dies out;* MARGARET *puts her hands on* JULIAN'S *shoulders, and looks up lovingly into his eyes.*

MARGARET. [*Softly.*] *Dear* Julian!

JULIAN. [*Puts his arms about her, and draws her to him. He kisses her, and speaks softly.*] My darling wife!

MARGARET. [*With her head on his shoulder.*] Mother hated to leave us alone!

[*Both laugh.*

JULIAN. Margaret, what a lucky man I am!

[*Leading her to the sofa.*

MARGARET. Nonsense! The luck is all on my side. Shall we have some music? Do you feel able?

JULIAN. Yes, indeed! But later! First, I've something I want to tell you.

[*He makes a movement for them to sit down; she hangs back.*

MARGARET. That article about Philip Long? Don't trouble!

JULIAN. It isn't trouble, dear. At least, I feel it's better to tell you what there is to tell.

MARGARET. Very well, Julian, if you wish. But of course I don't believe a word in the article!

JULIAN. Yet in a way some of it is true.

[*They sit down.*

MARGARET. In what way?

JULIAN. Well, once I *did* write a couple of love letters to Miss Forster.

MARGARET. [*Smilingly.*] No, I don't believe you. You're trying to tease me.

JULIAN. No, it's true! But it was three years ago. Before I knew you even, I had broken with her. I won't insult the word "love" by using it in connection with her; but I believed in her. And in something like a fortnight she herself disillusioned me! I was a boy as far as women were concerned. I'd always been a man's man, caring only for man's company. I wasn't a woman-hater; it was only I hadn't come in contact with them, and didn't miss woman then — to be honest.

MARGARET. And now?

JULIAN. Now!! Now!!! [*His arms about her.*] This old story, foolish and empty, hasn't made you doubt me, has it?

MARGARET. No, no!

JULIAN. [*Holds her in his arms.*] All my time, all my desires, as a very young man, had been wrapt up in my profession. Do you forgive me?

MARGARET. Of course! Of course!!

JULIAN. When I met you, I'd already forgotten the woman. My experience hadn't embittered me. I knew she was a bad lot, and I'd forgotten her.

MARGARET. But you'd seen many other women since that, — before you met me!

JULIAN. By George, yes! Millions!! Some made my eyelashes quiver just a little, perhaps! But I was on my guard! And when I met you, I stopped right then! And before long I knew here was the real thing — love that you read about — lasting, faithful! You believe me, Margaret?

MARGARET. Yes. [*Rising, and looking at him, with her hands on his shoulder.*] And, Julian, I don't ask to be your first love; I only want to be your *last.* Come, let's play.

JULIAN. [*Rising.*] You understand, I never saw or thought of Claire Forster again, till I found her trying to ruin my friend!

MARGARET. I understand everything good of you, Julian, and nothing bad. [*He puts his arms about her.*] I understand how I love you, first and last and always. I have perfect faith in you! *You* represent life in this world to me. I love you — and I believe in your love for me. That's all I can say. I mean ten million times more than that. But I know of no words to say it in. And if I did know the words, then they would fall short still ten million times of what my love and your love mean to me!

JULIAN. Thank you! I wish I were worthier of you. I feel so ashamed of the story I've told you.

MARGARET. Don't! I've forgotten it! You forget it, too! Come, we'll play, and that'll drive it out of our minds. [*Going to piano.*] You hear me! It's to be driven out of our minds *for good!* [*He kisses her.*

JULIAN. Bless you, Margaret! [*They go to the piano,* MARGARET *to the Left.* JULIAN *sits.*] What shall we play?

MARGARET. What *you* want!

[*Taking out her violin.*

JULIAN. No, what *you* want!

[*They laugh at each other.*

MARGARET. I want what *you* choose!

JULIAN. That's just the way I feel.

[*They both laugh again.*

MARGARET. Now, we are a foolish pair of lovers!

JULIAN. [*Picking up a piece of music.*] This?

MARGARET. [*Looking at it.*] Yes.

[*As they are getting ready to play.*

JULIAN. How thoughtful of Mrs. Warner to have had her rehearsal, and taken our guests away!

MARGARET. Yes! I'm afraid she didn't do it purposely, but it *was* nice of her, all the same!

JULIAN. Our guests were very nice. *But* —!

MARGARET. Exactly! "But"! How happy we are alone together, Julian, in our own home.

[*He seizes her hand, which holds the bow, and kisses it. Then they begin to play. Once or twice they look at each other and smile as they play. After a few seconds, the door opens*

quickly, and a POLICE INSPECTOR *enters with* WALTERS. *A* POLICEMAN *is in the hall outside.*

WALTERS. Mr. Rolfe, this man insists —

[*They stop playing, and* JULIAN *rises.*

INSPECTOR. [*Coming down to them.*] Is this Mr. Julian Rolfe?

JULIAN. It is. Why do you come into my house like this? What do you want?

INSPECTOR. [*Very quietly.*] I have an order for your arrest.

MARGARET. What!

INSPECTOR. I'm very sorry to break in on you like this, m'm.

JULIAN. Come, this is some practical joke!

INSPECTOR. Practical joke! Good God, what do you take me for? [*He goes to the door, opens it, and calls:*] Sweeney!

SWEENEY. [*Appears at the door.*] Yes, sir.

[MARGARET *puts down her violin.*

INSPECTOR. Captain Warren there?

WARREN. [*Answering from outside.*] Yes, sir!

INSPECTOR. All right.

[*Closes the door.*

MARGARET. Julian!

INSPECTOR. Excuse me, but this is no joke!

JULIAN. You've really come here to arrest me?

INSPECTOR. Yes, sir, and I hope you'll make my duty as easy as possible for us both, by coming with me quietly.

MARGARET. Julian!

JULIAN. Wait in the hall, Walters.

WALTERS. Yes, sir. [*Goes out.*

JULIAN. But what are you arresting me for?

INSPECTOR. For the murder of Philip Long.

MARGARET. No! No! It's impossible. Why, you're crazy! My husband was Philip Long's best friend! My husband is a man whose character is above reproach. You can't bring a charge like that against my husband! Why, half New York will rise to resist you — fight you!

JULIAN. One minute, Margaret, dear, — please! [*To* INSPECTOR.] Where's your warrant?

INSPECTOR. [*Hands* JULIAN *the warrant. To* MARGARET.] It's the State who's bringing the charge, — not I, m'm.

MARGARET. [*Growing excited.*] But do you mean to tell me that in a free country like ours, an innocent man can be taken by force at night from his own house, from his wife's arms, and without any redress?

JULIAN. [*Calmingly.*] Margaret, dear! [*To the* INSPECTOR.] Where are you going to take me?

INSPECTOR. To the nearest station house, to-night, where the charge will be formally entered.

MARGARET. [*Aghast.*] The charge!

[JULIAN *makes a tender, calming gesture toward her.*

INSPECTOR. To-morrow morning you will appear before —

MARGARET. But my husband's ill! He's an ill man!

JULIAN. What about bail?

MARGARET. [*Quickly.*] Yes, I'll get bail somewhere! Who shall I go to, Julian? There are fifty rich men who'd come to your assistance, I know!

INSPECTOR. I can't say anything about bail. It's for the Judge to decide; but I'm afraid you mustn't count on bail in a case of this sort.

JULIAN. In a case like this where there can be absolutely *no* proof?

INSPECTOR. Excuse me,—it's not my business to discuss the case with you, but to take you to the station house. Only, I advise you to take along anything you may want in the way of clothes or comforts you're allowed, because, take my word for it, the proofs are enough to rob you of your chance of bail.

MARGARET. [*Much more excited.*] It's a lie! Do you hear me, it's a lie! Julian!

JULIAN. Keep calm, dear!

INSPECTOR. I take it you don't read the evening papers!

JULIAN. You're arresting me on that article about my letters?

MARGARET. He wrote them years ago! He —

JULIAN. [*To* MARGARET, *kindly.*] Ssh!

INSPECTOR. The woman has made a very damaging statement which will be read to you. Are you ready to go with me?

JULIAN. Oh! She's made a statement, has she?

MARGARET. Yes, but you can't take the word of a creature like that, who is perhaps lying to save herself!

INSPECTOR. Are you ready to come?

MARGARET. [*More excited, verging on hysterics.*] No! No! You can't take him away like this! You sha'n't!

JULIAN. Margaret!

MARGARET. He's been ill, I tell you! You can't take him away, to sleep where or how! You've no right to risk his life!

JULIAN. Margaret, I must go! But it'll be all right. I'll be back soon — maybe to-morrow. [*Going to her.*] Good night, dear.

MARGARET. [*Hysterical.*] No! No! I can't bear it, Julian! I realize better than you the risk you're running. He's been ill for two months; he hasn't been out of the house yet! Let him stay home to-night. I give you my word he'll be here to-morrow morning. Give him your word, too, Julian!

JULIAN. That's impossible. The law's the law! I'm perfectly able to go with this man. Calm yourself, if you love me! And say good night. [*She tries to calm her hysteria; he embraces and kisses her; she sobs hysterically. He turns to the* INSPECTOR.] I'm ready!

MARGARET. Oh, no! Not yet! Not yet! Perhaps we can think of some way!

INSPECTOR. There's no way, Madam, except the way to the station house. If your husband is innocent, he'll prove it. But meanwhile —

MARGARET. [*Interrupting, and clinging to* JULIAN.] No, Julian, don't go! Refuse to go! They really can't make you. You didn't do this dreadful thing, and you know it, and can prove it, without their taking you away! Don't go! Don't go!

JULIAN. My love! My love! Be strong!

INSPECTOR. Come now, Madam. He's got to go; he knows, and he's willing. You're only making things worse.

MARGARET. No, I'm not! I tell you he isn't fit to go out to-night, and to go to such a horror!

JULIAN. [*In agony at her suffering.*] Margaret!

MARGARET. A chill, the strain, anything might bring back his illness! It'd kill him! He sha'n't go! I won't let him! Do you hear me?

I'll hang on to you both, to hold you back; and God'll give me strength!

INSPECTOR. Come along!

JULIAN. [*Aside to the* INSPECTOR.] No! Call in your men and take me away as if by force! Once I'm gone, it'll be easier for her.

MARGARET. Do you hear me? You sha'n't take him out of this room, — at any rate without me!

JULIAN. [*To the* INSPECTOR.] Quick!

[*The* INSPECTOR *goes toward the door.*

MARGARET. [*In an ecstacy, thinking he's going to leave them.*] You'll leave him!! Oh, thank you! Thank you! He'll be here to-morrow, I promise you! We'll both be here! You won't be sorry!

INSPECTOR. I'm not going to leave him! I want my men. [*Opens the door and calls:*] Sweeney!

MARGARET. Julian!

[*Running to him, and embracing him; he tries to calm her.*

SWEENEY. [*As he comes in.*] Yes, sir.

INSPECTOR. Take charge of this man!

SWEENEY. Yes, sir.

[*Going to* JULIAN.

MARGARET. [*Hysterical,—almost beside herself.*] No! No!

JULIAN. I must go with him, dear, and you're making it so hard for me!

[*Going.*

MARGARET. Then take me, too! Let me go with him. Arrest me, too!

[*Going after them, and catching hold of* JULIAN.

INSPECTOR. No, Madam!

MARGARET. Yes! Yes! That's all I ask, now. Take me with him!

INSPECTOR. It can't be!

JULIAN. Stay here, dear! Stay here!

MARGARET. [*Beside herself.*] No! No! Take me, too. I will go, too!

INSPECTOR. [*Pulling her away from* JULIAN.] *No!*

JULIAN. [*To the* INSPECTOR.] Be careful!

[JULIAN, *the* POLICEMAN *and* INSPECTOR *move toward door.*

MARGARET. [*Quite beside herself, half screams, half cries.*] No, I can't bear it. You sha'n't separate us! Julian! [*Running to them, she clings to* JULIAN *at the door. He tries tenderly to free himself from her, but can't. The* POLICEMAN *and* INSPECTOR *pull him through the door, dragging her along, as she clings to* JULIAN.] They sha'n't separate us! I will go with you, Julian, I will go with you!

[JULIAN *tries to calm her with* "Margaret, my dear little woman." *The double doors are open, and they are heard in the hall outside.*

INSPECTOR. [*Taking* JULIAN'S *arm.*] You must get rid of her! [*The* POLICEMAN *closes the doors.* MARGARET *is heard crying that she won't leave him, and the* INSPECTOR, *loud, angry, losing at last his control, says:*] By God, you must let go of him!

MARGARET. [*Off stage.*] No! No! You'll see!

INSPECTOR. [*Off stage.*] Sweeney, throw the woman off!

JULIAN. [*Off stage.*] *No!*

MARGARET. [*Screams.*] *No!*

[*There is a loud bang on the door, as* MARGARET'S *body strikes it. The door bursting open, she falls in, and tumbles on the floor, crying,* "Julian! Julian!"

JULIAN. [*Off stage.*] Damn you for a beast!

INSPECTOR. [*Off stage.*] Here, come along. I've stood all I can, now. The door, Warren!

MARGARET. [*On the floor, helpless in her hysteria, raises herself on her elbow, calling out:*] Julian! Julian!

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

SCENE: *Visitors' Room at the Tombs*

[MARGARET, MRS. HUGHES, *and* TOMPSON *shown in by the attendant.*

MRS. HUGHES. [*To* MARGARET.] Oh, dear, is this where you have to see him every time?

MARGARET. Yes, mother.

MRS. HUGHES. What awful taste! They might have furnished it better. Look how well they do hotels now!

TOMPSON. You mustn't forget that the guests of smart hotels pay well. Here, the guests pay nothing, except with their consciences.

MARGARET. Julian is paying a heavy price, but not with his conscience.

TOMPSON. That's true! But to punish the guilty, the innocent must sometimes suffer. It's the history of the world!

MRS. HUGHES. Do you know, the place gets quite on my nerves! I really feel faint!

MARGARET. [*Going to her mother.*] Oh, mother, no!

MRS. HUGHES. Yes, really. Do you think Julian will be here soon?

TOMPSON. [*Looking at his watch.*] Well, we're a little ahead of our time, but I think he'll be here presently.

MRS. HUGHES. Do you think he'd feel very badly if I didn't wait? [*Rising.*] I'll leave my card here, do you see, and turn down the end to show I really came myself; but, of course, you'll be here and could tell him!

MARGARET. [*Rising and giving the card back to*

MRS. HUGHES.] Don't leave your card, mother, —leave your love. I'll give it to Julian,—and you go. It's just as well, because Mr. Tompson and I will have much to say about the case to him.

MRS. HUGHES. I know, and I'd like to stay here and advise, but I really do feel so awfully upset by the whole thing! To think that a son-in-law of Mrs. Winifred Hughes should be in this place!

MARGARET. Yes, yes, mother! I think it's better you should go. Your nerves won't stand it.

[*She motions to* TOMPSON, *who opens the door.*

MRS. HUGHES. I really oughtn't to have come. I knew I oughtn't, but you persuaded me!

MARGARET. No, mother, I begged you not to come, but you insisted!

MRS. HUGHES. Yes, I know, — I thought you meant you wanted me to. I can't go out alone!

MARGARET. There's a man there who'll show you the way.

[*The* ATTENDANT *appears.*

ATTENDANT. This way, Madam.

MRS. HUGHES. Thank you. [*To* MARGARET.] Give him my love!

MARGARET. Yes.

[MRS. HUGHES *goes out.* TOMPSON *and* MARGARET *come back into the room.*

TOMPSON. Shall I leave you alone with Rolfe, and come back?

MARGARET. When he comes, if you would! — for a few minutes.

TOMPSON. Of course, of course!

MARGARET. But not for long. [*She smiles sadly.*] You keep me calm!

TOMPSON. Don't you worry about yourself. You're wonderful, Mrs. Rolfe, in your self-possession and nerve!

MARGARET. You're very good, but I lost control of myself entirely, that awful night, three weeks ago.

TOMPSON. Oh, but that was natural — natural.

MARGARET. I was tired out by all my anxiety during his illness, I suppose, — because I'm not naturally an overstrung woman.

TOMPSON. You don't have to tell me that, now, after the way you've behaved these three weeks!

MARGARET. Still, I feel if only you'd been there when it happened, if they'd only come a little earlier in the evening, when you *were* there, I wouldn't have gone to pieces so! I blame myself, because it made it all the more terrible for him.

TOMPSON. You still feel absolutely convinced he was totally unprepared?

MARGARET. [*Surprised.*] Why, yes, — of course! What a funny question for you to ask me!

TOMPSON. Oh, that's my business, you know, —asking every kind of question.

MARGARET. Yes, — but —?

[*With a look of suspicion.*

TOMPSON. I think it so unfortunate that Rolfe never told you of his little affair with Miss Forster.

MARGARET. It wasn't an affair!

TOMPSON. Well, whatever you want to call it!

MARGARET. But he did.

TOMPSON. Yes, when the cat was out of the bag; when the letters were published.

MARGARET. But —

TOMPSON. Don't you see how that will tell against him?

MARGARET. No!

TOMPSON. He only tells you when forced to, and then claims the letters were three years old.

MARGARET. He doesn't *claim;* he states a fact. They were!

TOMPSON. But the dates on them are only a few days before the murder!

MARGARET. Forged, of course, — you know that!

TOMPSON. Yes, and anyway, I suppose we must leave that to the writing experts. We'll at least see that we furnish as many as they do!

MARGARET. But — but you are arguing with

me as if your confidence had — as if you thought —

TOMPSON. I'm thinking nothing. I'm only trying to look at everything from every side.

[*She glances at him doubtfully a second, then speaks emphatically.*

MARGARET. There is only one side to look at, — Julian's absolute and entire innocence, which no one who even knows him slightly can doubt for a moment!

TOMPSON. That's all right as a point of view for his wife, but not for his lawyer, who wants to save him.

MARGARET. [*Going to the window.*] There couldn't be such a miscarriage of justice.

TOMPSON. I could cite you *several* instances, within your memory in the last fifteen years in

New York, where men have expiated the crime of murder, with their friends and family and many of the public absolutely convinced of their entire innocence.

MARGARET. [*Turning on him.*] Oh, but it's cruel of you to talk like this to me! *Why* do you!

TOMPSON. Because I *must* rouse you to a realization of the fact that the evidence in this case, rightly or wrongly, is terribly against your husband!

MARGARET. Wrongly! Wrongly!!

TOMPSON. [*Quietly.*] Of course! But we must work every second, and in every direction, all the same, to help him. [MARGARET *turns away, half crying, to control herself.*] I'm sorry to seem to be so hard, and to have to be cruel. You must take my word for that!

MARGARET. [*Her eyes filling with tears.*] But I can't help feeling a change in you — in your mind and heart — about him. I don't know what it is, I can't put my hand on any special thing, but I *feel* it — I don't know — it's an instinct which women have. You *have* wavered in your confidence!

TOMPSON. [*Going to her.*] *You* haven't?

MARGARET. No!!

TOMPSON. Well, I don't say I have. Perhaps I feel I've not been told everything; that Julian, for some reason or other, hasn't been perfectly frank!

MARGARET. What reason? There couldn't be any!

TOMPSON. For instance, just as he kept back his acquaintance with her.

MARGARET. But he's made a clean breast of

that, and of everything, you can be sure, that has to do with Miss Forster.

TOMPSON. And with Philip Long?

MARGARET. And with Philip Long. I am sure of it!

TOMPSON. [*Turning on her very quickly and sharply.*] Do you know anything, — no matter what — no matter how trivial, — that I don't know?

MARGARET. [*Stands still a moment, searching in her mind, in her memory.* TOMPSON *watches her closely. After a minute, she speaks slowly:*] No — no! I'm sure I don't! [*He watches her in silence, to read in her face if she is speaking the truth. After a pause:*] But you are taking the offensive attitude with us — with me! Why? Why do you —?

TOMPSON. If I am to save him, I must know everything — everything!

MARGARET. [*Going to him, frightened and yet confident.*] But you do! You do!

TOMPSON. There is a most damaging new piece of evidence come up in the case. The other side tried to keep it secret, — to spring upon us in the trial, — but, fortunately, a newspaper got hold of it, and we have our chance to refute it — [*he adds, almost to himself*] if we can.

MARGARET. [*Eager, anxious, distressed.*] What is it?

TOMPSON. Wait till he comes, and I'll tell you both together.

MARGARET. And he'll explain it away to you in a moment, if it's honest evidence. [JULIAN *is shown in. He is very pale, but otherwise looks well.*] Julian!

[*She hurries to him; they embrace.*

JULIAN. How are you, Tompson?

[*They shake hands.*

MARGARET. How do you feel, Julian? Are you well?

JULIAN. My dear girl, I never felt better in my life! You mustn't worry about my health. I'd like to get out into the air, but I assure you that the doctor's orders have been so carefully carried out as to *enforced quiet and rest* — [*with a smile*] that I'm entirely well again! Any news?

[*They all sit down.*

MARGARET. [*Quickly.*] Yes, dear Julian! And the same good news always! Everyone I know, believing in you absolutely, — fighting for you! Everyone too kind for words to me! I've not heard a soul who doubts that the trial will be a triumph for you. You've seen the letter in this morning's —

JULIAN. Yes, it was fine, wasn't it? And all this good-will, of course, means a lot to me, es-

pecially for your sake! [*They sit side by side, holding each other's hands.*] But I mean, have you any practical news? How is the case progressing, Tompson?

TOMPSON. I want to look over a paper or two, outside. I'll come back in a few minutes, and go over everything with you.

JULIAN. [*To stop him.*] But —?

MARGARET. [*To* JULIAN *aside, interrupting him.*] No! He wants to leave us alone. Let him. [*Smiling.*

[TOMPSON *goes out.*

JULIAN. [*Embracing* MARGARET *again.*] My poor, darling Margaret, what you have to bear! And for me — that's so hard!

MARGARET. [*Resting in his arms, with her head on his shoulder.*] Shh! Listen, dearest, I've something very important to tell you while he's

out of the room — something I've only just now discovered.

[*Looking at him.*

JULIAN. Yes, dear?

MARGARET. Mr. Tompson is lukewarm.

JULIAN. How do you mean?

MARGARET. [*Rising.*] I don't know. I don't feel satisfied. I wonder if we ought to bring in another firm?

JULIAN. You don't mean he doubts for a moment the impossibility of my being guilty of the crime of Philip's death?

MARGARET. [*Quickly.*] No, no! Of course not, — I don't say that, — only — I don't know! To-day, he asks me all sorts of questions, and such odd questions, — as to whether you'd told me everything, and whether you'd told *him* everything you'd told me — and —

JULIAN. And what did you say?

MARGARET. I don't remember. I only know, of course, I told him you had no secrets about this, from me or him!

JULIAN. Not one!

[*Taking her two hands.*

MARGARET. No, don't say it! I want you to feel I know it, without your saying it. Oh, Julian, how I suffer for you!

JULIAN. That's one of the strangely cruel things about it all. I feel as if, were it only myself, I could bear it so much easier. But it's the thought of *you!* And with you, it's the thought of *me!*

MARGARET. If I could only be here in the prison with you — share it all with you!

JULIAN. But think what I would feel at your being here in these surroundings — *for me!*

MARGARET. [*Sighing.*] Yes, I know, I know, — and I've my work to do for you, outside. Well, you think it's all right, then, for us to keep on with Tompson?

JULIAN. Oh, yes; as far as I can judge, he seems to be doing everything. I'm sure of it!

MARGARET. And after all, whoever we have, whatever he does, they can't help but free you, my good Julian!

JULIAN. I hope so. I believe so, Margaret! Of course, if I allowed myself to dwell on my being here — in all this strain, under this awful cloud, almost disgraced by the mere fact of the accusation —

MARGARET. [*Interrupting, with her arm about him.*] Oh, no, Julian, you mustn't say that!

JULIAN. But it's true! I am a respectable

and respected citizen of this city, who's never done a dishonorable action in my life!

MARGARET. [*With perfect confidence.*] Never!

JULIAN. Never even done a tricky thing in business!

MARGARET. I'm sure of it!

JULIAN. [*Goes on, scarcely noticing* MARGARET'S *interruptions. He rises.*] With a perfectly clean record, publicly and privately, I can yet be hauled up — accused of a crime, clapped into jail, forced to stand trial for my life! Why, it's inconceivable! It's like the Middle Ages!

MARGARET. [*Going on.*] It's an outrage! It's a dastardly outrage!

JULIAN. No, — for if you reason it out in cold blood, how else can the criminal laws of the state be properly carried out?

MARGARET. [*Striking the table.*] Any other

way! Any other way that will prevent an innocent man suffering what you have!

JULIAN. [*Looks at her, with a smile.*] And an innocent woman, dearest. [*Putting his arm around her.*] No, I guess our laws are better made than we could make them.

[TOMPSON *knocks at the door.*

MARGARET. Come in.

[TOMPSON *enters.*

TOMPSON. [*To* MARGARET.] Now, I'm going to ask a favor of you, — turn about is fair play. I want you to give me fifteen minutes alone with your husband.

MARGARET. No! Why? You told me you had some serious evidence against us to tell Julian. I wish to hear it, too!

JULIAN. [*Quickly.*] What is that?

TOMPSON. There are several matters which

I wish to discuss with your husband, which I feel we could better speak of without your presence.

MARGARET. Why?

JULIAN. If Mr. Tompson really wishes, Margaret —?

MARGARET. No! I don't want anything good or bad kept from me. I don't want to be shut out from you in any of this ordeal of yours. I want to share it all, — *all* with you. You have no secrets from me, I know, Julian!

JULIAN. None!

MARGARET. And you don't want to have any, do you?

JULIAN. No, but if Mr. Tompson —

MARGARET. No! I don't wish to offend Mr. Tompson, — [*she turns to him*] as I hope you know, but I am not willing for you to question my husband, and without me here. You haven't

got the faith I have; you showed that to me just now. You're weakening. I daren't leave you for long, ever again, Mr. Tompson, until this case is finished. Your faith in my husband is like a flame dying down. [TOMPSON *makes a gesture of dissent.*] It is! And I'm going to watch that flame, day and night, and feed it with my own faith, and keep it alive! And I won't leave him alone with you unless Julian insists on my going.

TOMPSON. I only wanted you to go so as to spare you some extra pain which it doesn't seem necessary at present to inflict on you.

JULIAN. Then, why not go, Margaret?

MARGARET. No, don't ask! Please don't ask me to shirk any pain that I can share with you. Besides, pain or not, I want to *know everything* — just what we have to fight!

JULIAN. [*Who is standing beside her, with his arms around her, gives her a hug, and says impulsively to* TOMPSON, *with a smile:*] What a bully little woman she is!

TOMPSON. Very well! They've got a letter of Philip Long's, written to you the very day of his death, which they claim is enough to prove their case against you!

JULIAN. But I never received any such letter.

TOMPSON. No, — they claim it was never sent. It was found among his effects lately.

MARGARET. Huh! A forgery, like the dates on Julian's letters to her!

TOMPSON. I have reason to believe the letter is authentic; though, of course, if it's offered as evidence, we will put our experts to work on it. I have a copy of the letter here.

MARGARET. [*Going quickly to him.*] Here!

JULIAN. Why didn't you say so!

MARGARET. What does it say?

[*With excitement, both speaking in the same haste.*

TOMPSON. [*Reading.*] "Julian, I have found out quite by accident — not from her — that you were here to see Claire to-day."

JULIAN. I went that morning to see her privately, to ask her to break off with Philip of her own accord — to frighten her into doing it, if I could, without the scene with all three — which I knew would only be brutal and degrading for Philip, — in fact, for all of us!

TOMPSON. I see. Your visit at night was the second visit that day?

JULIAN. Yes, that time we went together.

MARGARET. You know, of course, Philip and he together.

TOMPSON. Well, but what I can't possibly understand is, why I have never heard of this morning visit before!

[MARGARET *looks at* JULIAN, *confident of his sure answer.*

JULIAN. I didn't think to tell you.

TOMPSON. Didn't think! Didn't think!!

MARGARET. It wasn't successful! He has told of the second, the important visit!

JULIAN. Miss Forster was out when I called. I didn't see her, — that is why I didn't mention the visit. It didn't count then.

TOMPSON. I'm afraid you'll find it will count now, and strong against you!

MARGARET. Oh!

JULIAN. When I met Philip at his club, in the

evening, he was in a half-drunken rage with me, as I've stated in my evidence. We had all this out, then. He accused me of every kind of treachery, but I knew he didn't know what he was saying, and I easily forgave him — especially as I was on my way then with him to prove his jealousy wholly wrong.

TOMPSON. The letter goes on — [*Reads.*] "When I told Claire of your visit, she pretended not to know anything about it, — not to have seen you, — but I soon saw she was trying to protect you, knowing what friends we were — so I made her own up to the truth. I told her you were moving Heaven and Hell to keep me from marrying her, and then she out with it: that you had been to see her that morning — and many mornings; that she had love letters from you she could show me, to prove what she

said; and that the only reason you were against her and my marriage was because you were in love with her yourself. You're a damn fine friend! And by G —" The rest isn't fit to read.

[*He lays the letter down on the table.*

MARGARET. Nor was what you have read fit to read, either!

JULIAN. Poor, rotten chap! She'd got her devilish work in with him already! What a dear, good sort he used to be, — and gone to the dogs through that woman! Of course he was drunk when he wrote that letter — drunk when she told him all that rigmarole about me! It seems to me I do remember his saying something about having written a letter — when we had our row in my rooms.

TOMPSON. You had a row with him, then? That night?

JULIAN. No! Not a row exactly! He came in with this same story, and I gave it the lie. I could always influence his better nature. He practically believed me when we started out for his rooms. That's when he said something about a letter he was glad he hadn't sent.

MARGARET. He believed in you, even when he wrote that letter, and that's why he never sent it.

TOMPSON. That's a good theory. People write in a rage, and don't send the letter on second thoughts, knowing it may not be the best thing after all. I hope we can persuade the jury of that. But then, there's the woman.

JULIAN. How?

TOMPSON. Well, if she swears that what's in the letter is true, you've got her word, supported

by the letter, against only your unsupported explanation.

JULIAN. Hum! They'll produce Claire Forster, of course, for their principal witness?

TOMPSON. Oh, naturally!

JULIAN. Well, but then you'll cross-examine her?

TOMPSON. Certainly.

JULIAN. Surely you'll be able to trip her up in her tissue of lies.

TOMPSON. Not surely. She'll be prepared for a tough time with us; she'll be primed! She'll be ready for anything!

JULIAN. And she's very clever!

TOMPSON. [*Serious, but kind.*] Then there's a lot of terribly strong circumstantial proof against you. [MARGARET *rises.*

JULIAN. I see it, — I begin to see it!

TOMPSON. If you'd only gone straight home when you left Long and her together.

JULIAN. I couldn't! My brain was on fire! I had to walk it off in the cool of the night. I walked for two hours in the Park.

TOMPSON. Exactly, and in that second hour he killed himself, and you can't prove an alibi. It's as if the Devil himself had planned it! If you'd only met a policeman in the Park.

JULIAN. Perhaps I did! I didn't notice. If I'd only been seen leaving her house at half past twelve.

TOMPSON. But you weren't. We can't get a single witness of that sort. Why did you keep it hidden you'd ever known this woman?

JULIAN. Was it a thing to boast of?

TOMPSON. Those love letters dated the week of the murder!

JULIAN. The writing experts'll prove the dates false.

TOMPSON. You don't know those experts. There'll be as many to prove them true.

MARGARET. You think that, — you don't know!

TOMPSON. Well, leave everything else, and just consider what's come up to-day! — this damning letter of Long's to tally with the forged date of your love letters to her!

[MARGARET *goes to the table, and takes up the letter.*

MARGARET. He can explain it!

JULIAN. Juries don't want explanations, dear; they want proofs!

[*He takes the letter from* MARGARET, *and looks at it.*

TOMPSON. This morning visit to her, which I only found out to-day — suppose that had been

sprung on us at the trial!! It might have, there and then.

MARGARET. [*In distress.*] You see! You see! I tell you, your faith is weakening!

[*Almost in tears.* JULIAN *turns and puts his hand on her shoulder.*

TOMPSON. And then this quarrel with him before you went to his house. First you say a quarrel, and then no quarrel. You contradict yourself, — [MARGARET *looks up*] you deny, you explain. But you prove nothing. You prove *nothing!* On the contrary!! I won't *dare* put you in the witness-box.

MARGARET. Put *me! I'll* prove how deep and true his love for me was at that very time. No man is such a blackguard as they want to make out Julian, that he could love another woman at the very moment he was marrying

me. I tell you there was never a happier bride in the world than he made me! That must prove *something!*

TOMPSON. [*Going toward them, in a lowered voice.*] Here, in these four walls, with no one to hear but her who loves you above everything, and I, who want to-day — more than anything else in the world, — to save you, but in order to do that, as your lawyer, must be told the truth, all the truth! — come, tell me, so help you God, the truth now, and I will believe you! You did not kill Philip Long?

[JULIAN *looks up at him, horrified.*

MARGARET. Julian, I told you! Oh, that *you* should have to suffer that! Don't answer him, — he doesn't deserve it!

JULIAN. [*Very quietly, after looking into* TOMPSON'S *face.*] No, I didn't kill my friend!

TOMPSON. You had a quarrel, perhaps, and in the heat of the quarrel —

JULIAN. No!

TOMPSON. Say he wasn't your friend, — say he was your enemy, — he insulted you — perhaps your wife?

JULIAN. No! No!

MARGARET. Julian! Julian! [*She throws her arms around him, and holds him fast.*] You sha'n't ask him any more such brutal questions.

TOMPSON. [*Still quietly, but firmly.*] He may have made the first attack on you! Furious at the insults you were piling on the woman he loved, — you struck in self-defense, perhaps —

MARGARET. [*Interrupting him.*] No! No!! No!!!

JULIAN. [*Quietly, firmly.*] I did not raise my hand against my friend; I did not hurt him —

let alone kill him, — and I am and always have been telling you the truth.

TOMPSON. [*After a few seconds' pause, looking* JULIAN *straight in the eyes.*] Thank God! I wanted to believe it, and *I do!* [*To* MARGARET.] Forgive me! Remember, you're his wife, — and let me tell you, your faith has helped to keep mine alive — and it will save him, if anything can.

MARGARET. My faith in him is more than human, — it comes from my very soul, and you know in our souls lives whatever there is of the divine in us.

[*The* ATTENDANT *enters.*

ATTENDANT. Excuse me, Mr. Rolfe's time is up.

MARGARET. [*Turning to* JULIAN.] Already?

TOMPSON. But we must tell you the good news! The trial is set for the March calendar.

JULIAN. Not till then?

TOMPSON. Ah, but we will need that time! They're making out a strong case and, although it is a false one, we will have plenty to do, between now and then, getting material and proof and witnesses to combat their evidence!

JULIAN. Yes, I suppose so, I suppose so! [*He turns to* MARGARET, *handing the letter to* TOMPSON.] It's strange, I don't understand why, but I can't feel the horror, — I can't realize the position.

MARGARET. That's because you're incapable of even imagining yourself in the position of a man who had done the dreadful thing they accuse you of.

TOMPSON. Yes, if you were guilty, you'd realize it easy enough. And now I want you to go to work, and search your memory through and

through for any infinitesimal detail that may have to do with your case. Or anything which has to do with either Long or the Forster woman, or both, — even if in your own mind it has nothing to do with the case. And tell me the result to-morrow. I don't want any more surprises. For the future, let's be prepared beforehand for anything the other side may spring on us. [*Taking his hand.*] Good-by!

JULIAN. [*Shaking hands cheerfully.*] Good-by!

[*As* TOMPSON *goes out, he turns his back discreetly.*

MARGARET. Till to-morrow, Julian.

JULIAN. [*Kissing her.*] Till to-morrow.

MARGARET. You're not discouraged?

JULIAN. Not a bit, — and don't you lose heart, either.

MARGARET. Ah, never!

JULIAN. And forgive me!

MARGARET. Hush! Are you comfortable in your room?

JULIAN. [*Half humorously.*] Yes. [*Then he adds quickly for her sake:*] *Yes,* quite!

MARGARET. There's nothing I can do to make you more comfortable?

JULIAN. No, dear, no! Till to-morrow.

[*Goes out with the* ATTENDANT.

[MARGARET *stands a second, lost in thought.* TOMPSON *is waiting for her.*

TOMPSON. Shall we go?

MARGARET. Wait a minute. Mr. Tompson, at last I've thought of something I can do, if only you say so, too!

TOMPSON. What is it?

MARGARET. There is one person who knows the truth about it all.

TOMPSON. Claire Forster?

MARGARET. Yes. She's "the woman in the case." There's always a woman!

TOMPSON. Generally.

MARGARET. Always!

TOMPSON. *Generally!*

MARGARET. ALWAYS!!

TOMPSON. But in this instance there is a double difficulty, — the woman in the case isn't hidden, — she stands out before everybody, as chief witness, chief accuser.

MARGARET. Ah, but you're wrong! It's the real woman hidden inside her bold, lying front that is the true woman in this case. The woman who knows and who would speak the truth if we could only get at her!

TOMPSON. I see your point, and it's good.

MARGARET. The thing is to get at the woman.

[*Walking up and down.*

TOMPSON. Hum! — Difficult!

MARGARET. Oh, yes, — only a woman could!

TOMPSON. Could even another woman?

MARGARET. I think so. And I'm going to try!

TOMPSON. You!

MARGARET. [*Standing still.*] Yes! Who better? Do you suppose she's ever seen me?

TOMPSON. No, she'd never heard of you till just before your marriage. You were then in the country, where she could not possibly have been. And ever since you came back from your wedding journey, you've been practically shut up in Rolfe's sick-room. No! It's every chance she hasn't seen you.

MARGARET. You know where she lives?

TOMPSON. Oh, yes, — our detectives have been watching her for the last three weeks.

MARGARET. They must tell me everything they know, and then you must call them off.

TOMPSON. What is your plan?

MARGARET. It's perfectly straightforward, and if it works at all, it will be very simple. I suppose she lives in a flat?

TOMPSON. Yes, a very ordinary one — considering everything. It seems she's a miser.

MARGARET. Good! A weakness to work on. Every little helps! I am going to live in the same house,—as close to her apartment as I can get.

TOMPSON. You? You can't live there!!

MARGARET. Why not?

TOMPSON. It's impossible! The place — the neighborhood! Everything around you will revolt you.

MARGARET. Everything around will mean the

same to me — Julian's release! Julian's vindication! I mean to meet this woman, somehow, — and her friends; to copy their manners, to be one of them in spirit, in conversation, in eating, drinking, smoking, — what you like!

TOMPSON. [*Amazed.*] *You!!*

MARGARET. Yes! Yes! Will you men never understand what a woman can undergo for a man she loves! You men endure physical torture for our sakes — that our bodies refuse to support, — but we make it up in what we can endure mentally and spiritually for you!

TOMPSON. [*Takes her hand and presses it.*] You are splendid!

[*Half shamefacedly, he kisses her hand.*

MARGARET. No, no! Whatever I am, it is Julian's love and example have made me.

[*The* ATTENDANT *enters.*

ATTENDANT. Mr. Tompson?

[*Both turn.*

TOMPSON. Yes?

ATTENDANT. There's a lady here got permission to see Mr. Rolfe. I told her he had gone back, but that you were here, and she'd like to come in, all the same.

TOMPSON. Ask her name.

[*The* ATTENDANT *goes out.*

MARGARET. [*After a pause.*] Can it be mother come back?

TOMPSON. You can step behind the door, and I'll keep it open in case it's no one you want to see.

ATTENDANT. [*Coming back.*] Miss Claire Forster.

[TOMPSON *and* MARGARET *look at each other in astonishment.*

TOMPSON. Show her in.

MARGARET. No! Why?

TOMPSON. You will see.

[MARGARET *goes quickly behind the door.* TOMPSON *stands with his hand on the knob, holding it far back so that* MARGARET *is completely hidden behind it. The* ATTENDANT *comes in with* CLAIRE. *She is a young woman, pretty and slender, of a rather refined appearance — just the opposite of her real nature. The* ATTENDANT *waits in the doorway.*

TOMPSON. Miss Claire Forster?

CLAIRE. [*Abruptly.*] Yes! Who are you?

TOMPSON. I am the attorney for Mr. Rolfe. My name is Tompson, of Tompson & Slade.

CLAIRE. All right. I want to see Mr. Rolfe. I suppose I'll see quite enough of you at the trial.

[*Laughing.*

TOMPSON. [*With exaggerated politeness.*] Let us hope you won't see too much of me!

CLAIRE. Impossible! I only wish you were *my* lawyer!

TOMPSON. [*Dryly.*] Thanks.

CLAIRE. However, the question now is, am I to see Mr. Rolfe, — isn't it?

TOMPSON. Well, of course Mr. Rolfe would not see you without my permission.

CLAIRE. Really?

TOMPSON. Naturally not, as I am in charge of his case.

CLAIRE. Well, but I am sure a charming gentleman like you won't refuse me a small request like that.

TOMPSON. Turn about is fair play. Will you favor me?

CLAIRE. With pleasure! How?

TOMPSON. Tell me why you wish to see Mr. Rolfe.

CLAIRE. [*Going toward him.*] What cheek!

[*A movement on the part of* TOMPSON *more surely to conceal* MARGARET.

TOMPSON. Oh, I don't know! [*Going to her, and leading her out of the way, to a chair.*] He will tell me, if you don't.

CLAIRE. I'm not sure! Did he tell you I was coming to see him to-day?

TOMPSON. [*Quickly.*] No.

CLAIRE. But he knew it!

TOMPSON. [*Quietly.*] Ah!

CLAIRE. You don't believe me!

TOMPSON. No.

CLAIRE. You can't prove he didn't get a letter from me this morning.

TOMPSON. Perhaps I couldn't *prove* it to a

prejudiced person, but I think it would be very possible! For myself, of course, I don't need any proof!

CLAIRE. I've come for the sake of old days!

TOMPSON. [*Irritated.*] Oh, come!

CLAIRE. [*Emphatically.*] *I've come for the sake of old days*, to tell him how sorry I am to have been the unwilling means of putting him into his present unpleasant position.

TOMPSON. Humph!

CLAIRE. I want to tell him how sorry I am about those letters! The very day they were found, I had made up my mind to destroy them!

TOMPSON. Humph!!

CLAIRE. That's all I wanted to see him for, — a visit of sympathy, — and to tell him things.

TOMPSON. Humph!!!

CLAIRE. As a friend!

TOMPSON. [*Almost beside himself. Rising.*] No, by George! Upon my soul, I never heard of such cruel impudence in all my life!

CLAIRE. [*With baby surprise.*] How do you mean?

TOMPSON. You haven't come here privately, have you?

CLAIRE. No, I tried to keep it quiet, but I couldn't possibly. All the newspapers know of my being here!

TOMPSON. And a nice impression that will make for our case, won't it?

CLAIRE. I hope it won't do any harm. It's against my will I'm being used so against Julian!

TOMPSON. Here, don't you call him Julian — not before me, anyway! Do you know what I've a good mind to do?

CLAIRE. No. What?

TOMPSON. Let you see Rolfe. It would serve you right.

CLAIRE. [*Indignantly.*] How serve me right!

TOMPSON. You know he'd make it a pretty hot visit for you! But I'm not willing to put him in such a painful position as seeing you. Why, what do you take me for? You never expected to see Mr. Rolfe! You've calculated very carefully how what you call a friendly visit from you would tell against him. You give away your whole pose, of the unwilling witness. Veneered on top of your desire to revenge yourself up to the hilt is your love of notoriety, — and here you are satisfying both at the same time! But don't flatter yourself these newspapers who've escorted you here are your friends, — not at all! They're after the "Truth," and when they find you've deceived them into

thinking it was hidden in your petticoats — Well! You'll get all the notoriety then you want! Only, God help you for the kind it will be!

CLAIRE. [*Rising.*] It's impossible for me to talk to you any longer! You're no gentleman! We don't speak the same language!

TOMPSON. No, mine's decent, even when I'm off guard, — and truthful, I hope.

CLAIRE. [*Looks at him and sneers.*] Pooh! Rats!

[*She goes out, followed by the* ATTENDANT. TOMPSON *follows her to the doorway, and looks after her. He closes the door, and* MARGARET *comes forward.*

MARGARET. [*Nervously, holding some paper, a pencil and her cardcase, on which she has been writing.*] Quick, let us go!

TOMPSON. Not yet. Give her time to get away first.

MARGARET. Of course! Here. [*She hands him the piece of paper.*] I've taken notes of everything she said. They may come in useful! The woman never sent Julian a line! You believe what you said, don't you?

TOMPSON. I do!

MARGARET. [*Relieved.*] Ah! That's better! You've a man to send at once to find out if there's an empty flat in her house?

TOMPSON. Yes.

MARGARET. If there is, I'll take it to-morrow. I mean to worm myself into this woman's confidence, somehow.

TOMPSON. She is clever!

MARGARET. So will I be. She will have more than one weak spot.

TOMPSON. She drinks!

MARGARET. If she drinks enough, she'll never keep her secret! I'll try that. I'll drink with her, — I'll powder and paint and dye my hair. I'll live her life with her, whatever it is. And then, what a reward if, at the end, with you hidden somewhere for a witness, I get the true story from her lips!

TOMPSON. [*Going to the door.*] The coast is clear!

MARGARET. [*As they go out.*] Good! I can't wait to begin. [*She turns, and looks back into the room toward where* JULIAN *went out.*] Julian! I've got my hands on the Woman in your case, and I mean to choke out of her the truth and your freedom before I let her go!

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT III

SCENE: MARGARET'S *flat in West 52d Street. Two months later. Doors Right and Left. A lace-curtained bow window. Under a big brass chandelier, shaded by a large, flaring red silk shade, is a supper table set for four. The furniture is gilt. Imitation palms stand on the radiator and on a white fur rug by the window. There is an upright piano, with popular music on it. Professional photographs are all about. Parti-colored, sporting pennants are crossed behind the pictures on the figured wall. The time is 10:45 P.M.*

[*Enter* WALTERS, *showing in* TOMPSON, *with hat and coat.*

TOMPSON. [*Who is smoking a cigarette.*] So this is it, is it?

WALTERS. Yes, sir.

TOMPSON. [*Looking at the supper table.*] And everything's ready?

WALTERS. Yes, sir.

TOMPSON. Do you know what theatre they've gone to?

WALTERS. [*Putting finishing touches to the table.*] No, sir.

TOMPSON. You're sure Miss Forster's servants are all out.

WALTERS. Yes, sir. Her cook's left, and the maid's gone for the night. She don't sleep in the flat.

TOMPSON. [*Goes to the bow window and looks out.*] Well, I'm sure I couldn't possibly have been seen coming in. How long has the cook downstairs been gone?

WALTERS. I should say as Miss Forster'd been having her meals with us for about a month now. Of course she jumped at the chance to cut expenses.

TOMPSON. Yes, that was a very clever idea of Mrs. Rolfe's to work it in that way! But it must be very hard for your mistress! Not even to have her breakfast by herself!

WALTERS. Oh, as to that, Miss Forster ain't strong on breakfasts. All the same, it's been a pretty hard job for Mrs. Rolfe, sir.

TOMPSON. And you've done your share splendidly, Walters. You've proved worthy of every bit of confidence we've placed in you.

WALTERS. Thank you, sir. I was a bell-boy in a country hotel when Mrs. Rolfe's family took hold of me, and I couldn't ever repay them for all they've done. Besides, I'm proud to have a hand in helping get Mr. Rolfe free!

TOMPSON. [*Holding out his hand.*] Here, Walters!

WALTERS. No, thank you, sir; not for that, sir.

TOMPSON. What's the matter with you, Walters? There's no money in my hand. I want to shake yours, — that's all!

WALTERS. Oh! Excuse me, sir! Thank you, sir.

[*Gives his hand to* MR. TOMPSON, *who gives it a good, hearty shake.*

TOMPSON. So *this* is the place where she's been playing her heart-rending little comedy!

WALTERS. Yes, sir.

TOMPSON. [*Looking around the room.*] Mrs. Rolfe didn't do it up herself, did she?

WALTERS. Oh, no, sir, — this ain't her taste! This was done by Birdie Lancaster. We've rented it furnished.

TOMPSON. I tell you, there's nothing like these musical comedies to help an honest girl earn a living!

WALTERS. [*Still arranging the table.*] Birdie isn't here this Winter.

TOMPSON. No?

WALTERS. No, sir. She's at Nice and Monte Carlo.

TOMPSON. Oh! Do you know which room we're to hide in?

WALTERS. Yes, sir. This door.

[*Opening door at Right.*

TOMPSON. [*Looking in.*] Hum! All right. Tell the man outside to come in.

WALTERS. Yes, sir.

[*Opens the door.*

TOMPSON. [*Going to the door and calling:*] Williams! [WILLIAMS *enters.*

WILLIAMS. Yes, sir.

TOMPSON. This is our cozy corner.

WILLIAMS. Very good, sir. Shall I go right in?

TOMPSON. Yes, if you will, please. [WILLIAMS *goes out.* TOMPSON *turns to* WALTERS.] Who makes the four at supper?

WALTERS. Miss Forster's young man and Mr. O'Neill.

TOMPSON. Hard on Mr. O'Neill! I suppose he's had to chum up a good deal with Miss Forster's friend?

WALTERS. Not very pleasant. Mr. Klauffsky's not Mr. O'Neill's sort exactly, and Mr. O'Neill's nothing like the actor Mrs. Rolfe is.

TOMPSON. You never forget and call her Mrs. Rolfe by mistake?

WALTERS. Oh, never. Always Mrs. Darcy!

TOMPSON. They can't get in without ringing?

WALTERS. No, sir. It's too bad you couldn't manage to put off the trial, sir! It's that's driven Mrs. Rolfe nearly crazy. She keeps saying if she only had more time, more time!

TOMPSON. We did our best.

WALTERS. Still, on the other hand, she's nearly used up, sir! Several times lately she's locked herself up in her room with hysterics. We could hear her way in our part of the flat.

TOMPSON. Poor woman! Poor, plucky woman!

WALTERS. When she found out to-day was Miss Forster's birthday, she had the idea of this party and supper after. She got Mr. O'Neill to get an admission for Mr. Klauffsky, to some private playing club for to-night. Mr. Klauffsky's a big gambler, and has been crazy to get

into one of these select, swell joints. After they're once at the table with a lot of champagne opened and everything's started, I'm to come in with a note to Mr. O'Neill. He will have tipped off Klauffsky to get away, too, and they'll both make a break to go. That's the plan.

[*A bell rings.* TOMPSON *puts his cigarette end out on a plate, and leaves it there on the table.*

TOMPSON. Here they are. Go on. I know the room!

[WALTERS *goes out Left and* TOMPSON *Right, after looking around to get his bearings.*

MARGARET. [*Heard outside.*] Has Mr. Tompson come?

WALTERS. [*Also outside.*] Yes, ma'am.

MARGARET. [*Still speaking outside.*] Listen at the door, and warn us when you hear the elevator.

They won't be here for some time yet. [*She enters. She is utterly changed. Her hair is dressed in an exaggerated ultra-fashion. She looks haggard and pale — and is wearing a very elaborate theatre gown, and a quantity of jewels.*] Where are you? [*Goes to the door to* TOMPSON.] Come, they aren't with me. [*She shakes his hand as he joins her.*] I'm so glad you're here.

TOMPSON. My dear, how hot your hand is!

MARGARET. And I must be a fright. You've got some one with you? For a witness?

TOMPSON. Yes, — Williams.

MARGARET. [*Sitting down beside* TOMPSON *on the sofa.*] I'm beginning to feel the strain tremendously. And to-night! Oh, the suspense of this night! Will it ever be over, — and yet I dread to have it over, for fear! When I was alone in the carriage just now, I had to break

down. I couldn't help it! I shall end up in being a regular hysterical woman. But at least I washed off the filthy paint and powder from my face with my tears!

[*She leans her head on the arm of the sofa and cries.*

TOMPSON. I'm afraid you're making yourself ill.

[*He lights a new cigarette.*

MARGARET. No, no, it's only that I feel to-night is my *last chance!* The case comes on to-morrow! I must appear in my true colors; and yet, after these two awful months, I haven't accomplished what I started out to do — what I must accomplish! What I will, to-night! Oh, I feel I shall go raving, stark mad!

TOMPSON. But how is it you are back before the others?

MARGARET. The best luck in the world, my

dear friend! I wanted so much to see you alone — if only for a minute. I was taken really faint during the third act. Fortunately, even she herself saw it, and advised me to go home, — that the air would pull me up, — put "me on my legs," I think she said! Oh, wait till you hear my vocabulary to-night! Thank Heaven, you won't be able to see me! I'm so ashamed of myself half the time. But the thought of Julian carries me through everything! If I only had more time, more time!

TOMPSON. Of course, if the case goes against us, we can appeal.

MARGARET. But then this opportunity's gone for good. Oh! [*Rising.*] I will *make that woman talk to-night!* If I can only keep my own head! It's wonderful what I have been able to stand, — in the way of dissipation, I mean.

I, who had no particular scruples about it, but just loathed the taste of alcohol in any way!

[*She walks up and down, feverishly.*

TOMPSON. But can't you pretend to drink?

MARGARET. Perhaps now, but I wouldn't at first. I was so afraid she'd get suspicious. And, ugh, the sickening, beastly hours I've passed with her!! But I'm sure I have her confidence now.

TOMPSON. Good!

MARGARET. She nearly lives here, you know. And if I only had had the time, I'd have managed that! Though she's the most loathsome thing a decent woman ever came in contact with, yet I share my table with her! — and I'd be willing to share one room, one bed even! — to get the truth from her!

TOMPSON. She's told you plenty of confidences. It's odd how she always fights shy of this one.

MARGARET. I should say she must have told me everything else in her life! And what a life! Oh, Julian, Julian, I'm glad you'll never know what I've been through! And if only it will prove worth while! I've got her several times right up to the subject, like a horse to a fence, — but she balks every time! I feel that she will tell me! I feel that she knows she's going to tell me; that she's afraid she's going to tell me, and doesn't want to! Once or twice, if I'd just pushed the subject a little farther, pressed just one question more, perhaps, she might have told it. And yet I didn't dare, because the very fact of my pressing her might have roused her suspicions. I've schooled myself not to show the slightest atom of curiosity about the affair.

TOMPSON. Hard! Very hard!

MARGARET. But she starts the subject herself, *apropos* of some new evidence or theory in a paper, perhaps. I look bored. I am only afraid she will hear my heart beat — it sounds like a cannonading to me! Fifty questions rush to my lips, but I bite them back! I make a weak effort to change the conversation, — weak enough not to really change it, but not strong enough to arouse a grain of suspicion in her sharp, ugly little nature! But so far, nothing done, nothing accomplished!

TOMPSON. Don't be discouraged. You have to-night, and it is your best chance yet!

MARGARET. Has Walters told you the scheme?

TOMPSON. Yes. How did you happen to take in Jimmy O'Neill?

MARGARET. Well, I had to have some man to pretend to be flirting with, and to have in hand

always. I'd known Jimmy a long time, — knew how faithful and trustworthy he was! Look what a devoted creature he's always been to Elsie Brewster, — who treats him really disgracefully! He was especially devoted to Julian, — looked on him as a sort of older brother, — so he seemed to me the best to choose.

TOMPSON. Walters seems to have done his part well.

MARGARET. Oh, he's been splendid! Such a help, and never once forgot, though even I do!

TOMPSON. Forgot what?

MARGARET. Oh, my mask! The other day, it was funny, I forgot all my acquired vulgarity for a moment, and was speaking quite naturally, just being myself. She began to laugh.

TOMPSON. Why?

MARGARET. That's it! What do you think she said? [*Laughing.*] "Stop putting on such airs with me, old girl! You are the most affected old thing sometimes, as if you were trying to make me believe you were a real lady!"

[*Enter* WALTERS *quickly and softly.*

WALTERS. [*Under his breath.*] The elevator's coming up!

[TOMPSON *rises. All half whisper.*

MARGARET. How can it be they're so soon! [*To* WALTERS.] Have you the note for Mr. O'Neill?

WALTERS. Yes, ma'am.

MARGARET. [*To* TOMPSON.] Your cigarette smoke. She might smell it and be suspicious.

TOMPSON. What a damn shame.

[*Throws his cigarette into the grate.*

MARGARET. Never mind! Give me one!

No! She might notice by some chance it wasn't one of our own.

[WALTERS *hands her the box from the table. She takes one.*

TOMPSON. But can you?

[*Handing her a lighted match.*

MARGARET. Oh, my dear man! I don't care about it, but if only it was *all* as easy as this!

[*Lights her cigarette. Bell rings.*

WALTERS. [*To* TOMPSON.] Lock the door, sir, to be sure.

[TOMPSON *goes out Right, and locks the door after him.* WALTERS *goes out Left.* MARGARET, *with a hasty look about her, rearranges* TOMPSON'S *chair, and goes out Right.*

CLAIRE. [*Heard outside.*] Well, Walters. Look out! Don't walk all over my dress with your great feet! How is Mrs. Darcy?

WALTERS. She seems all right.

CLAIRE. I said all she needed was air, and to get away from that rotten show.

KLAUFFSKY. [*Who speaks with a slight German accent. Off stage.*] Right you are! And there wasn't a single pretty girl on the stage. The theatre's no good since the highbrow took to the business.

[*Enter* CLAIRE, *calling* "Belle," *followed by* KLAUFFSKY *and* O'NEILL. CLAIRE *is very over-dressed for the theatre, and wears a huge picture hat.*

CLAIRE. Belle!

MARGARET. [*Calling out from her room.*] Yep!

[*Her voice, her manner, everything about her, is different — common and loud.*

CLAIRE. [*Closing the shutters.*] Stop doing yourself up. We're starved.

MARGARET. Oh, shut up! I'm getting into something comfy. Begin without me!

CLAIRE. [*To* O'NEILL.] Go on, you know her room. Bring her out! I'm going to take off my theatre hat, and be comfy, too.

[*She stands before the mantel and removes her hat.*

O'NEILL *goes to* MARGARET'S *door and knocks.*

CLAIRE. Hear him knock!

MARGARET. Who is it?

O'NEILL. Jimmy.

MARGARET. Well, Jimmy, you go away from there! If you want to know what's good for you, you just make tracks.

CLAIRE. [*Sitting down at the table. In a loud voice.*] I dare him to go in!

O'NEILL. What? I won't take a dare!

[*Turns the knob, but with really no intention of going in.*

CLAIRE. [*To* KLAUFFSKY.] Sit down, Louis.

[*He sits beside her.*

MARGARET. You come one step into this room, Jimmy, and I swear I'll kick you out!

O'NEILL. Hah — and she would, too! No, thanks!

MARGARET. I'll come out when I'm darned good and ready.

O'NEILL. Right you are, Mrs. Darcy!

KLAUFFSKY. [*Pretending to rise from his chair. To* CLAIRE.] Do you dare *me* to go?

CLAIRE. No, I don't! [*Pulling him down into his place.*] You're entirely too free with Belle, as it is. It's only that I trust *her*, or I'd make a damn row!

KLAUFFSKY. I'd like to see you! You must be hot stuff!

CLAIRE. Yes, you wouldn't want to see me

twice! I say — what's she doing anyway! Coming home pretending to be sick! I don't believe she was sick at all! Don't believe she came home alone! Jimmy! She's going back on you. [*She finds* TOMPSON'S *cigarette end on the plate.*] Yep! I knew it; here's a cigarette end, and not one of ours! [*She holds up the cigarette.*

O'NEILL. Nonsense!

CLAIRE. Nonsense yourself! Where is he? He can't have gone. She expected us to stay through the rest of the opera, but we weren't ten minutes after her. Aha! [*She is amused, thoroughly enjoying it.*] That's why she wouldn't come out. She's hiding a man in there. This is a scream! [*Calls.*] Belle! We've caught you! It's no use! Come on, bring him out!

MARGARET. [*From her room.*] I don't know what you're talking about.

CLAIRE. Well, I'll show you. [*To* O'NEILL.] Come along! There's only two rooms he can hide in, unless he's gone into the kitchen. I'll go into her room, if you won't, and you look into the next one. Belle, you're caught!

[*She goes to* MARGARET'S *room. Inside, the two women are heard,* CLAIRE *laughing and saying,* "Where is he? Come along out with him! Jimmy's looking in the next room," *etc.,* MARGARET *denying it. The two women are heard laughing and talking, but not distinctly, through the following speeches between the two men.* O'NEILL *had gone to door, Right; he tries it; it is locked.* KLAUFFSKY *is watching.*

KLAUFFSKY. [*Rising.*] By George, it's locked! She has got some one!

O'NEILL. The locked door don't prove it!

KLAUFFSKY. What'll you bet.

O'NEILL. [*Going quickly to him.*] Say, Klauffsky!

KLAUFFSKY. Look here, don't you mind. They're all like that! Let's teach 'em both a lesson! [*He makes a movement toward the door.*

O'NEILL. No! Listen, I say, — don't let on we know. See?

KLAUFFSKY. What the hell —

O'NEILL. [*Interrupting.*] No, I don't like a row! This is my business, and I want to see it through my own way — with your permission!

KLAUFFSKY. All right, all right!

O'NEILL. You want to play to-night, don't you?

KLAUFFSKY. Bet your life!

O'NEILL. Well, we'll carry out our original plan, and to-morrow I'll call around and have

it out with Mrs. — er — Darcy, quietly, by ourselves. I don't want to be made a fool of before Miss Forster.

KLAUFFSKY. I'm wise! Guess you're right!

CLAIRE. [*Coming back.*] No luck for me! How about you?

O'NEILL. Nothing!

CLAIRE. Well! I'm not satisfied, all the same. [*Enter* WALTERS, *with a cold chicken and a salad.*] Thank the Lord, here comes *food!* Oh, I say, Walters, — what gentleman's been here this evening?

WALTERS. [*Stares at her blankly. Then, after a moment, he says:*] Nobody that I've seen, — and I've been in all the evening.

CLAIRE. Well then, what's the meaning of this cigarette end on the plate? Are cigarette stumps on the bill of fare? [*Laughing.*

WALTERS. [*Looking.*] Oh, [*after a pause*] I'm very sorry! I don't know how I ever came to do it, but there's no use denying it, because they're my cigarettes!

CLAIRE. Well, you are a dirty, cheeky devil, smoking here in the parlor! And you wouldn't do it twice, if you were my servant, I can tell you that!

[WALTERS *goes out as* MARGARET *enters, having changed to a "tea gown." She is very much painted, rouged, etc.*

MARGARET. Now, I feel much better!

[*She joins* CLAIRE *and* KLAUFFSKY *at the table.*

CLAIRE. The trouble with you is you wear your corsets too tight!

[*She laughs and looks at the men, as if she'd said something clever.*

MARGARET. [*Laughs.*] Oh, come off, old girl,

— and anyway I have to do something to have any show up against a beautiful figure like you!

[WALTERS *enters with a magnum of champagne in a cooler, which he puts near the table, and goes out.*

CLAIRE. [*To* KLAUFFSKY.] What do you think of that for a lady friend! She and Jimmy here are the first two non-jealous people I've ever struck.

MARGARET. Why lug in Jimmy?

CLAIRE. Why, I believe you've got a man around here, somewhere, and he don't care a hang.

MARGARET. Because he knows it isn't true.

CLAIRE. Perhaps not.

KLAUFFSKY. [*To* CLAIRE.] What's the odds anyway, old girl. It's not *your* funeral!

CLAIRE. Hello! The party on my right has waked up!

[WALTERS *brings in another bottle of champagne, and puts it in the ice.*

MARGARET. That's all, Walters. You needn't wait. [WALTERS *goes out.*] Come now, let's have a toast! Break open that magnum, Jimmy, and drink the health and many happy returns —

CLAIRE. [*Interrupting.*] Hold on, not too many returns! In about two more years I'm not going to have any more of these birthday returns coming in! Celebrate — but no questions asked!

[JIMMY *opens and pours out the champagne.*

MARGARET. Go on, Klauff — spiel!

KLAUFFSKY. To the beautiful and sweet tempered little girl beside me — who eats up a lot of money, but who's cheap at the price!

MARGARET. Hear, hear!
O'NEILL. Hear, hear! } [*Together.*
CLAIRE. Oh!

KLAUFFSKY. [*To* CLAIRE.] The best little —

[*He stops.*

ALL. What?

CLAIRE. Angel!

KLAUFFSKY. Ahem! Here goes, anyway. And the man who empties his glass first, gets a kiss. Hoch! [*They all clink glasses and drink,* MARGARET *echoing the* "Hoch." KLAUFFSKY *is through first.*] Give us a kiss!

CLAIRE. Go on! What do you take me for, before Mr. O'Neill.

[*Kisses her hand, and slaps his face with it. All laugh.*

CLAIRE. Go on, Belle. Give Jimmy one like that!

MARGARET. Shall I?

[*Kisses her hand to slap him.*

O'NEILL. No! [*Enter* WALTERS.

CLAIRE. Hello! More food! You're doing the grand thing, Belle!

WALTERS. A note for Mr. O'Neill.

[*Giving it.*

O'NEILL. I say, I'm sorry, but I'm afraid I know what this is! Yes, I tried to put off a business engagement; but, you see you didn't give me enough warning about the party, and I'll have to go!

KLAUFFSKY. It isn't that little New Orleans affair that I'm in, is it?

O'NEILL. Yes, that's just what it is.

[*Rising.*

KLAUFFSKY. Well, that is damn bad luck. [*Rising.*] It takes me, too!

CLAIRE. Oh, come, that's too thin! Business at this time of day!

MARGARET. True, for a fact, Claire. Don't let's let 'em go!

O'NEILL. [*To* WALTERS.] They didn't wait for an answer?

WALTERS. No, they said you were expected around. There was no answer.

O'NEILL. All right.

[WALTERS *goes out.*

CLAIRE. [*To* MARGARET.] Funny, I didn't hear the bell ring. Did you?

MARGARET. Yes. Just when we were drinking.

KLAUFFSKY. Awfully sorry, old girl.

CLAIRE. You're not really going?

KLAUFFSKY. Have to. Business is business!

CLAIRE. Oh, business be —. I don't believe you a minute! You've got something else on.

That's why you're breaking up our party. If you go, Louis, I'll never speak to you again! So long as I live!

KLAUFFSKY. Please yourself. Have you got a pen anywhere?

[*Taking a check-book from his pocket.*

CLAIRE. What you got there?

KLAUFFSKY. Check-book. Don't you recognize it?

[*He takes out a fountain pen and writes.* CLAIRE *winks at* MARGARET.

O'NEILL. [*To* MARGARET.] Good-by, Belle. Honest, I have to go!

CLAIRE. Oh, come off, Mr. O'Neill!

MARGARET. Yes! All right for *you*, Jimmy! Come along, one more drink, anyway!

O'NEILL. See you there!

[*He fills the glasses with champagne.*

MARGARET. [*Stopping him. Aside.*] Open the other bottle!

[*He does so, and fills the glasses again.*

KLAUFFSKY. [*To* CLAIRE, *handing her the check.*] Suppose you don't object to a little birthday present!

CLAIRE. [*Looking at it.*] I say, Louis, you are a brick! This *will* pull me out of a hole.

KLAUFFSKY. [*Lifting his glass.*] Well, here's luck!

CLAIRE. All the same, I don't take any stock in this midnight business or trip.

[*All drink, except* MARGARET, *who manages to empty her glass into the flowers in the centre of the table. All say good-by.* MARGARET *and* O'NEILL *exchange looks, as* KLAUFFSKY *goes to* CLAIRE.

CLAIRE. You're a nasty old pig to shake us, all the same!

KLAUFFSKY. How about to-morrow?

CLAIRE. I'll be busy all day to-morrow. Julian Rolfe's trial begins.

KLAUFFSKY. I meant dinner?

CLAIRE. Oh, all right!

KLAUFFSKY. [*To* O'NEILL, *who stands in the doorway.*] Will you bring Mrs. Darcy, O'Neill?

MARGARET. [*Quickly.*] No! I'm going to rest up to-morrow night, and try to get well.

CLAIRE. Don't you believe her. She's got a date with her friend of this evening!

O'NEILL. Oh, I guess I can take Belle's word!

[*Goes out.*

CLAIRE. My goodness! There's a good example for *you*, Louis!

KLAUFFSKY. Not on your life! Call for you at seven. Ta, ta, baby!

[*Goes out.*

CLAIRE. Louis, you're not going to leave me like that!

[*Follows him out.*

MARGARET. [*To* JIMMY.] You won't let him come back?

O'NEILL. Trust me! Good luck!

MARGARET. [*Almost breaking down.*] Jimmy, it's my last chance. If I fail —!

O'NEILL. You won't. Keep up your courage!

CLAIRE. [*Reëntering.*] I hate Louis' tobacco!

O'NEILL. Good-by.

CLAIRE. Good-by. [O'NEILL *goes out.*] Humph! They've gone out to have a good time on their own, I'll bet you.

MARGARET. Oh, well, what's the dif., old girl. We've got each other and a good supper! Come along, let's enjoy ourselves.

CLAIRE. [*Sits again at the table.*] No, just

give me some more wine. They've taken my appetite along with 'em.

[*Holds her glass.* MARGARET *fills it with champagne.*

MARGARET. I don't wonder Klauff's stuck on you, Claire. You look awfully well to-night.

CLAIRE. Is that why you hung back in the box all the time?

MARGARET. Yes — I looked like your mother.

CLAIRE. [*Laughs.*] You did look pretty seedy. I guess you can't stand my pace, Belle. I notice every little while you seem to shy at something!

MARGARET. Well, you know I think you're a wonder! You knock any other girl I ever knew out o' sight.

[*Lights a cigarette and takes two or three puffs.*

CLAIRE. What selfish beasts men are! My goodness! — and they're all alike! I never

knew really but *one* man who loved me more than himself! But there was one!

MARGARET. [*After a minute.*] Philip Long?

CLAIRE. Yep! Philip Long! At one time he'd have given up everything for me. Huh! [*A short pause.* MARGARET *waits.*] Do you blame me for hating the man who turned him against me?

MARGARET. No, I don't. [*She changes to* KLAUFFSKY'S *seat very quickly, sliding into it without really rising. She waits for* CLAIRE *to go on.* CLAIRE *sits looking into space and ahead of her. After a minute:*] No, I don't blame you at all. [*She fills* CLAIRE'S *glass. She waits.* CLAIRE *doesn't speak.*] *I'd hate* him in your place! [*A shorter pause.* CLAIRE *doesn't speak.*] Go on, drink your champagne, dear, and let's have a good talk!

[*Pushing* CLAIRE'S *glass towards her.*

CLAIRE. I like you! You're so sympathetic, and you aren't always wanting to talk about yourself! [*She drinks.*] Oh, the lies about men some girls can sit down and make up by the hour! — and think you're ninny enough to believe them! [*She notices* MARGARET *didn't drink.*] Say, you aren't drinking; go on, fill up! It'll do your head good!

[*She fills* MARGARET'S *and her glasses. She drinks some, and* MARGARET *pretends to.*

MARGARET. No, indeed, — in your place I wouldn't ever forgive — this other man — what's his name?

CLAIRE. Rolfe — Julian Rolfe. You bet I don't! Don't you worry about my forgiving him, either!

[MARGARET *grows more tense, puts out her cigarette, and leans a little nearer to* CLAIRE.

CLAIRE. Say, Belle, I've told you pretty nearly everything about myself. Suppose you take a turn now!

MARGARET. Oh, my life's so dull after yours! I'd rather hear you.

CLAIRE. Well, I've only got one story in my brain, to-night, and *that* I'd better not talk about! Are you always attracted by such young fellows as Jimmy O'Neill?

MARGARET. Why, yes, — I mean, I don't know, — I suppose so.

CLAIRE. Where did you come across him, anyway?

MARGARET. He's engaged to a lady friend of mine.

CLAIRE. [*Laughs.*] That's pretty good! I guess she won't consider you such a friend, when she hears you've taken him away from

her. Don't you dare treat me that way with Klauffsky.

MARGARET. No fear.

CLAIRE. Have you ever been really in love?

MARGARET. You mean *really*, so I didn't care if he had a cent or anything!

CLAIRE. Yep!

MARGARET. Yes, once.

CLAIRE. Really? Crazy about him? You've always seemed to me the cold sort! Go on, tell me about it.

MARGARET. I lived with him till about three weeks before I met you.

CLAIRE. Oh, I see; and that's what's the matter with you, now. You haven't got over it yet! Did you have a row? What's the matter?

MARGARET. Well, we're separated. But I hope we'll come together again.

CLAIRE. Don't you do it! Don't you be too soft-hearted! If he's left you once, he'd more'n likely do it again. Was it another woman?

MARGARET. [*Very slowly.*] Yes — it was — another woman — who separated us.

CLAIRE. Thought so!

MARGARET. Well, you hit it all right!

CLAIRE. I'll bet you hate her!

MARGARET. I do.

CLAIRE. Yes, you look it! I wouldn't want to have you look at me that way.

MARGARET. I hate her like you hate this man who kept Long from marrying you!

CLAIRE. I wonder! The man you love isn't dead.

MARGARET. Yes, but still — Claire, you've never told me. Do you believe Long was murdered?

CLAIRE. [*Looking at her, after a moment.*] Yes, I believe he was *murdered!*

[*A flash of disappointment passes over* MARGARET'S *face; to hide it, she rises, and puts her arm around* CLAIRE'S *shoulder and her head against* CLAIRE'S *head.*

MARGARET. Well, it was awfully hard for you, either way, and I'm sorrier'n I can say for you, old girl.

CLAIRE. You haven't finished your wine. Drink it up, and we'll have another! [MARGARET *is obliged to drink it.*] Good Heavens, the amount of this stuff Philip would get the best of! Never knew anything like it!

[*She fills their glasses.*

MARGARET. Really?

CLAIRE. Here's to his memory, and good luck to our side, to-morrow! [*She drinks;*

MARGARET *tries to drink, but the glass falls, spills and breaks.*] What's the matter?

MARGARET. I struck my hand on your chair. The d—d glass dropped. I'm nervous, to-night. I'm not well. Fill me Klauffsky's glass.

[*Pushing it towards* CLAIRE, *who fills it.* MARGARET *drinks some.*

CLAIRE. Klauffsky isn't going to have his legs pulled in his sleep.

[MARGARET *has come around, and sits at* CLAIRE'S *feet.*

MARGARET. Claire! Do you know what I wish you'd do, old girl? Give up your flat, and come here and stay.

CLAIRE. Oh, I don't think I ought to do that!

MARGARET. Yes, do! I want you to,—no bluff; come on! You might as well save that money.

CLAIRE. My goodness, it's awfully good of you, Belle, I must say!

MARGARET. Oh, that's all right. I get so lonely sometimes. I won't charge you a cent of rent.

CLAIRE. Well, if you really mean it, I suppose I could. My month's up next week.

MARGARET. Good! [*Rising.*] Then we'll consider it settled.

CLAIRE. How big is that other bedroom. Let's see.

[*She makes a movement toward the door.*

MARGARET. [*Stops her.*] No, darling, — I don't want you to see it now; not till I get it all ready for you. I'll surprise you with it, you'll see!

CLAIRE. All right!

[MARGARET *sinks into* O'NEILL'S *chair at the table.*

MARGARET. Good gracious, I wish we were in our wrappers, don't you? You'll see it will be ever so much nicer when you come here and live!

CLAIRE. Do you know, you're the nicest girl I ever met! Phil would have liked you!

MARGARET. [*Trying to look indifferent.*] Would he?

CLAIRE. Yep.

MARGARET. Why?

CLAIRE. Oh, you couldn't be too lady-like for Phil. Why, he even thought *I* was vulgar sometimes!

MARGARET. [*Moves about; she is too nervous to keep quiet.*] Still, that didn't keep him from wanting to marry you, did it?

CLAIRE. My dear, he was so ready to marry me that it's my own fault I didn't do it before that brute got a chance to break it up!

MARGARET. [*Seating herself again.*] Really?

CLAIRE. And that makes me hate him all the more.

MARGARET. How do you mean?

CLAIRE. Why, that I've only got myself to thank!

MARGARET. But, my dear girl, what I don't understand is how, when he was so in love with you, and you're so pretty and attractive and dear, — I don't see how he ever was persuaded to give you up.

CLAIRE. I guess you didn't follow the case very close when it first come out!

MARGARET. No. [*She rises again.*

CLAIRE. I say, am I keeping you up? Do you want to go to bed?

MARGARET. Not on your life! I don't want to go to bed for hours! I couldn't sleep a wink!

CLAIRE. It's funny you weren't interested in my case. Why, nobody talked about anything else for a week!

MARGARET. You see, I had my own troubles then, and I didn't care much about anybody else's. Tell me something about it.

[*Coming to* CLAIRE, *and leaning on the back of her chair.*

CLAIRE. Why, I've told you lots!

MARGARET. [*Very innocently.*] No, dear, you haven't. Why didn't he marry you, if he was ready to?

CLAIRE. Well, you see, Rolfe told a lot of lies about me, and prejudiced him in that way!

MARGARET. But I can't help thinking Long was a weak fellow to be persuaded by another man against you, dear.

CLAIRE. Here, don't you run down Phil! I won't stand it! He proved at the end he loved me, if any fellow ever did!

MARGARET. [*After a pause.*] How?

[*Slyly shoving the bottle of champagne toward her.*

CLAIRE. Oh, that's another story.

MARGARET. Go on, tell me. You know, everything about you's so interesting!

CLAIRE. Think so?

MARGARET. Yes. Why, I think you're perfectly wonderful! You know, you could write a great novel! You've got real genius the way you tell your stories. I'd rather listen to you than read, or go to a play, — really! Go on, and tell me some more!

[MARGARET *shoves the bottle a little closer toward* CLAIRE, *who at last sees it. She takes up the bottle.*

CLAIRE. Have some more — or had enough?

MARGARET. Oh, mercy, not yet!

[*Handing her a glass. Both drink.*

CLAIRE. I *like* you, Belle!

[*She is beginning to show the effects of the champagne.*

MARGARET. Go on, like a dear old duck!

CLAIRE. Where's Walters?

MARGARET. Gone to bed, of course, like a good servant.

CLAIRE. Sneaked out, more likely.

[*Looks around at the door to see if it is closed. A moment's pause.*

MARGARET. Why didn't you marry Long when you had the chance?

CLAIRE. Because I didn't want to do anything on the side! I wanted to wait and do the thing up in style, with a Church wedding and his

folks on hand. You know, I've always had an idea I'd kind o' like to get into Society.

MARGARET. Yes?

CLAIRE. The first time Rolfe got his hand in, I brought Philip round again. It was the very morning of the same night when it all happened.

MARGARET. Yes.

CLAIRE. Then he had a foolish idea of confronting Rolfe with me, to make me disprove all he'd said against me! So he brought us together at Phil's flat. Of course, if I'd had any idea of it, I wouldn't have had it for a minute.

[*Another pause.*

MARGARET. Yes?

CLAIRE. Look here, I can trust you, Belle! I'm talking very free with you. Honest, you'll never tell what I am telling you? I can trust you, Belle?

MARGARET. Why, Claire! How can you ask me that! Don't you know me yet?

[*She pours out more champagne, and both drink.*

CLAIRE. Yes, I *like* you.

MARGARET. Go on, dear, — it's just like an exciting novel.

CLAIRE. Well, you see, Rolfe accused me of everything under the sun to Phil, — right before me. It doesn't make any difference whether it was true or not, it was a *low-down trick!*

MARGARET. [*Emphatically.*] Yes, a dirty, low-down trick!

CLAIRE. Yes. And finally I got mad, and let out and told him so. But he'd got Philip dead against me by that time.

MARGARET. Um!

[*Making an almost invisible movement nearer.*

CLAIRE. Yes, and would you believe it, Belle, he got him to swear there and then he'd never marry me, so help him God!

MARGARET. No!

CLAIRE. *Yes!!* [*Then, almost crying, very much under the influence of the wine, now:*] What do you think of that?

MARGARET. I think it was rotten of him!

CLAIRE. [*Suddenly, angrily.*] But I'll make him pay for it! *I'll make him pay for it!*

MARGARET. [*Excitedly, as if in perfect sympathy.*] Yes! Make him pay good! Make him pay good!

CLAIRE. [*With a slight reaction in her manner, looking at* MARGARET.] Trust Claire Forster for that!

MARGARET. But couldn't you have made Phil break his promise?

CLAIRE. I don't believe so. He never broke a promise. When once he gave his word of honor about anything, you couldn't budge him! He was queer that way!

MARGARET. [*Leaning over nearer.*] What did you do then?

CLAIRE. When?

MARGARET. When he gave his word there in his room!

CLAIRE. Oh, I threw my arms around Philip, and begged him to take it back.

MARGARET. What did he say?

CLAIRE. He just turned around and asked Rolfe to leave us alone a minute.

MARGARET. And did he?

CLAIRE. [*After a short pause.*] Yes.

[*Another pause.*

MARGARET. And then what?

CLAIRE. I asked Phil if he meant what he'd said, and he answered "Yes!" Oh, but I was mad! Think what that meant to me! I told him I wished I'd never seen him; that he didn't love me and he never had loved me! I wish I hadn't said it, now. I don't know as it would have made any difference, all the same.

MARGARET. [*Breathlessly.*] Why?

CLAIRE. Because he stood up and faced me. I walked to the other side of the room, and was so mad at him! But he looked at me across the table and said — I can hear him now! — I hear him every night! — every time I shut my eyes I hear and see him —

MARGARET. [*With every muscle tense and strained.*] How?

CLAIRE. [*Forgetting* MARGARET.] "I love you so much," he said, "that, if I can't *marry you*, I

won't live without you." Oh, I can see him now! [*Putting her hands over her eyes.*

MARGARET. [*Leaning over and whispering, close to her:*] *Yes?*

CLAIRE. I saw his hand go behind his back, but I didn't dream! "My life's rotten anyway," he said, "and *I'm going to end it!*"

MARGARET. [*A cry almost escaping from her.*] *No!* [*She half rises in her seat.*

CLAIRE. [*Not hearing her or realizing; more to herself than to* MARGARET; *in a sodden, half-dead voice:*] And before I could get at him across the room, he'd shot himself!

MARGARET. [*Containing herself with a supreme effort, whispers tremblingly:*] *Philip Long shot himself?*

CLAIRE. Yes, shot himself right there before —

MARGARET. [*Losing all control, and letting*

herself go altogether, springs upon CLAIRE, *clutching her with both hands by her shoulders, and screams:*] *You Fiend!*

CLAIRE. [*Frightened, but not able to take it all in at once.*] *What?*

MARGARET. I am his wife! Do you understand? His wife! Julian Rolfe's wife! Julian — Rolfe's — wife!

CLAIRE. [*Dazed.*] What do you mean?

MARGARET. [*Still gripping* CLAIRE *with all her force.*] And he's free! Do you hear me, free!! Thanks to you! You! I've lived day and night with you; I've lied to you, and cheated you! I've sat and wallowed in the gutter with you! But it was all for Julian! Do you hear me? Mr. Tompson! Mr. Tompson!

TOMPSON. [*Unlocking the door, comes out, followed by the* INSPECTOR.] Bravo, Mrs. Rolfe!

MARGARET. [*Hysterically.*] Did you hear? Did you hear? Oh!

TOMPSON. Everything!

MARGARET. [*More hysterically.*] Every word?

TOMPSON. *Every word!*

MARGARET. Julian! Jul —

[*Her voice breaks, and she drops in a dead faint.*

[TOMPSON *rushes to her.* CLAIRE *sits, staring ahead of her, struck dumb with despair and fear.*

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT IV

SCENE: *At the* ROLFES'. MARGARET'S *room. It is simply furnished, but with great taste. The walls are in pink and white stripes. There are pink and white chintz curtains, and a white bed. The time is morning.*

[MRS. HUGHES *is discovered in an arm-chair, her head resting on her hand. There is a tap at the door. She goes softly and opens it. It is* JULIAN. MRS. HUGHES *puts her finger to her lips. They both speak in whispers.*

MRS. HUGHES. Shh! — not yet! She's just fallen asleep!

JULIAN. May I *look?*

MRS. HUGHES. Yes. But no noise!

[JULIAN *tiptoes a few steps in, and stands looking at* MARGARET.

MRS. HUGHES. [*Going to him, puts her hand on his shoulder.*] Come! — or she might feel you in the room, and wake! I'll send for you the moment she does, but let her have the sleep now. She needs all she can get, to give her strength to see you.

JULIAN. When she was awake early this morning, her mind was still clear?

MRS. HUGHES. Perfectly! — as yours; clearer than my foolish old mind ever is!

JULIAN. She asked for me?

MRS. HUGHES. Yes!

JULIAN. What did you tell her?

MRS. HUGHES. That she should see you today.

JULIAN. Why didn't you send for me then?

MRS. HUGHES. The doctor said not to, — not till she'd taken some nourishment. Remember how weak she is. It's only a day since the fever broke. And think what a strain on her poor, exhausted self, — the joy of seeing you again!

JULIAN. She knows I am free since yesterday?

MRS. HUGHES. Yes.

JULIAN. Did she ask about the trial?

MRS. HUGHES. I wouldn't let her talk about that. I said you were free and she would see you to-day.

JULIAN. I want her to know it was she who did it! *She* herself!

MRS. HUGHES. Believe me, Julian, she only cares that you are free, and here with your love to help her to get well.

JULIAN. Well, I'll go to my room now. But send for me the moment she wakes, won't you? — the *moment* you can!

MRS. HUGHES. Yes, yes, my dear boy — yes!

[JULIAN *exits Left.* MRS. HUGHES *goes softly toward the bed to see if* MARGARET *has been disturbed. She is sleeping quietly. As* MRS. HUGHES *goes back to her chair, a soft tap is heard on the door. She goes to it and opens it.* WALTERS *hands her a box, which contains a bunch of violets.*

WALTERS. From Mr. Tompson, — and Miss Brewster is here. May she come in?

MRS. HUGHES. Yes. [WALTERS *disappears, and* ELSIE *immediately enters.* MRS. HUGHES *kisses* ELSIE, *and closes the door behind her. She whispers:*] She's asleep.

ELSIE. Has she had a good night?

MRS. HUGHES. Splendid! Both nurse and I had a good nap ourselves.

ELSIE. And Julian! He came home last night?

MRS. HUGHES. Yes, but the doctor wouldn't let him in her room.

ELSIE. She hasn't seen him?

MRS. HUGHES. Not yet. We're so afraid of the excitement.

ELSIE. But she knows he's free?

MRS. HUGHES. Oh, yes! Only, she is not to hear any details until she is well.

ELSIE. My night's rest has refreshed me wonderfully. You go now and lie down, and let me watch.

MRS. HUGHES. No, I'm not tired, and I promised to send for Julian the moment she wakes up. [*She opens the box of flowers.*

ELSIE. I'll go for Julian, and send him, so as not to be here when they meet. What lovely violets!

MRS. HUGHES. [*Reads the card.*] "In gratitude that the best and pluckiest assistant I ever had has turned the corner at last toward recovery. Affectionately, George Tompson."

ELSIE. What a nice message! I want to tell you something! I'm announcing my engagement to Jimmy O'Neill to-day.

MRS. HUGHES. Really! I am glad!

ELSIE. Yes, you know when I heard what he'd done to help Margaret, I caved right in, but I didn't want to have any celebration till Mr. Rolfe was free. So we're announcing it to-day. And I tell Jimmy, with such a clever detective as he around all the time, I won't ever dare to even *look* at another man!

[*Laughs gently.* MARGARET *wakes, turns, and slightly lifts her head, but they do not observe her. Through the rest of the scene she follows all they say with suppressed emotion, — keeping herself still, lest they should find out she is awake and stop talking, but moving and reflecting in her face all that what they say means to her.*

MRS. HUGHES. Did Jimmy tell you anything about yesterday afternoon at the trial?

ELSIE. Yes. He said there was a wonderful scene in court.

MRS. HUGHES. Do tell me about it! I didn't like to ask Julian.

ELSIE. Well, of course the whole thing was a foregone conclusion, after Mr. Tompson's cross-examination of the Forster woman. But, all the same, until the verdict was actually given,

there was still a certain sort of uncertainty; nobody knew what mightn't turn up!

MRS. HUGHES. What a bold fight she made!

ELSIE. Yes. You see, with Margaret ill and unable to appear, she thought she had a chance. That's why the case went as far as it did — with her ridiculous tale that she knew Margaret all the time — and only wanted to draw her out!

MRS. HUGHES. She reckoned without Mr. Tompson!

ELSIE. Exactly! Well, yesterday, it seems, their side took three hours to sum up. People were furious! And Mr. Tompson spoke only ten minutes!

MRS. HUGHES. Was that *enough?*

ELSIE. [*Still whispering.*] Well, it seems so!!! There was enormous applause when he'd finished

— which Judge Carey stopped. Then the Judge's address to the jury lasted barely five minutes! And the jury *came back, almost before they all got out!* Then, when Julian stood up, looking so calm, so true, so utterly incapable of ever having done this thing! — Jimmy says, nearly everyone's eyes were wet. [MARGARET *wipes away the tears that are falling from hers.* MRS. HUGHES *also.*] But — after the verdict!! Such shouts! Such cheers! The Judge didn't try to stop it! Everyone wanting to shake his hand, and one woman *kissed him.*

MARGARET. [*In a clear voice.*] *What* woman?

[*Both turn in amazement.*

ELSIE. Margaret!

MRS. HUGHES. [*Going to her.*] When did you wake up, dear?

MARGARET. Oh, long ago! I've heard every

word. Oh, what I'd have given to have been there! There'd have been *two women* kiss him, then!

MRS. HUGHES. My darling, why did you let us go on?

MARGARET. It hasn't done me any harm, mother. See how calm I am. I've had a nice little sleep, — quite enough!

MRS. HUGHES. Elsie has helped nurse you every day, Margaret. I'm sure you want to thank her.

MARGARET. [*Holds out a slender hand.*] Oh, yes! Elsie, come here. [ELSIE *goes to her, and takes her hand, which* MARGARET *holds tight.*] Thank you, dear girl.

ELSIE. I'm announcing my engagement to Jimmy O'Neill to-day.

MARGARET. Are you! That's splendid!

ELSIE. Yes, — wasn't he fine?

MARGARET. He was dear! I wish you all the happiness I know you'll have.

ELSIE. Thank you.

MARGARET. Mother, now I want to see Julian!

ELSIE. I will send him.

[*She goes out.*

MRS. HUGHES. [*Gives* MARGARET *the violets.*] From Mr. Tompson, with this message.

[*Reading the card.*

MARGARET. They're lovely. [*Smiles over the card.*] Dear Mr. Tompson! Mother dear —

[*She hesitates.*

MRS. HUGHES. Yes?

MARGARET. You won't feel hurt, will you, dearest, — but I want to see Julian *alone.*

MRS. HUGHES. Of course, my dear Margaret, I understand perfectly! I'm going.

MARGARET. [*Taking her hand.*] How good you've been. You're all worn out — *dear* mother!

MRS. HUGHES. Not at all worn out! It's a joy to your foolish old mother to think she has been able to do something for you! Now, rest a minute till he comes.

[*She smooths* MARGARET'S *pillow, and then leaves the room.* MARGARET *closes her eyes. There is a moment's pause. The door opens; it is* JULIAN.

JULIAN. Margaret!

[*He goes to her.*

MARGARET. [*Trying to lift herself on her elbow.*] Don't say anything, Julian. To talk to you would be more joy than I feel I can bear just now.

JULIAN. Margaret! [*He sits on the bed beside her, putting his arm around her.*

MARGARET. Just lift me up in your arms —

so — and let my head rest on your shoulder — yes, like that!

[*He kisses her tenderly.*

MARGARET. [*Smiling up into his face.*] Oh, how quickly I shall get well, now!

THE CURTAIN FALLS

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